TELOS

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a quarterly journal of radical thought

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ON INTERPRETATION

by John Fekete

An Ancient Quarrel

When in the 1930s I.A. Richards moved from the "pseudo-statement" theory of literature inspired by logical positivism to the neo-Kantianism of his *Coleridge on Imagination*, Anglo-American theorists, especially New Critics, welcomed this as a signal to attend to the verbal strategies of literature as the foundation for its truth claims. Since then, this basic modern matrix has been stretched to include interpretive strategies ranging from logocentric reflection theories of privileged literary knowledge to logofugal theories of semantic play. A bewildering array of critical perspectives has developed during the last decade or so between these poles. The basic polarities tend to be distributed into a host of dichotomies within which symbol, image, and sign are distinguished or confounded in a Babel of critical languages.

This development appears to testify to the vitality of modern criticism whose abundant variety can perhaps be made intelligible in terms of some principle of coherence: indeed, this pluralism may be a symptom of an imposing new cultural universe. On one level, it is the post-Cartesian universe in which subject and object, critic and literature, are not radically separated, i.e., where the subject constructs the object of knowledge and is in turn redefined by it. On another level, that of everyday life, it is the universe of mass production and proliferation of information. Such an environment no longer provides unambiguous intentionally marked meanings. Rather, individuals appear (and perceive themselves) as points of exchange of pre-coded information whose sources are occluded within complex systems of relationships.

This world is characterized by the fading of any privileged authority sustaining objective hierarchies of meanings, by the disintegration of secure reference. Under this enormous centrifugal force disintegrating the Western mind, intellectual disciplines are forced into fundamental paradigm shifts. Criticism, too, has to be understood relative to pressures to rework its basic parameters bearing on relations among authors, texts, readers, and critics or, on a different level, literature, culture, and history.

Whatever the merits of George Steiner's view of critics as parasites on literature who, through recent structuralist programs of deconstruction, have begun to absorb the host to achieve their own autonomy in "metalanguages of autistic violence and obscurity," he is clearly correct in claiming that "criticism today occupies a status unequalled since the Alexandrian scholiasts and grammatologists."[1] Steiner's comparison also calls attention to an "ancient quarrel" about interpretation in the third century between the Alexandrian proponents of the *sensus spiritualis* and the Antioch proponents of the *sensus*

1. "Critic" and "Reader," in *New Literary History* X (Spring, 1979), p. 437.

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litteralis. The Aristotelian theologians of Antioch sought to preserve the original meanings of their texts and rejected allegorization, as against Origen and the dominant school of Alexandrian Platonists who shifted texts into their own conceptual framework in order to open them to manifold significance. This dispute was replayed in the Reformation and in modern times with the outcome on both occasions favoring the historicist-grammatical confirmation of origins, indeed, the postulation of the essential transparency of the original text, against the proliferation of references that obtain in the *extrinsic* allegorization of texts.[2] Correspondingly, literary interpretation rejects any external authorities that could ensure such conceptual anachronisms. Yet, the ancient disputes are far from exhausted. Rather, they are alive *within* the specifically modern problems of reading the *sensus litteralis*.

What is to guarantee the univocal objectivity of a text? Epistemological arguments bearing on the degree to which the interpreter's standpoint determines methodology, the formalist critics' challenge of authorial intention "as a standard for judging either the meaning or the value of a work of literary art,"[3] and structuralist focus on the "traces," "absences" and latent possibilities have all raised new questions about the text's objectivity. New versions of the ancient quarrel have reemerged between univocalist and plurivocalist theories of literary texts although, in the last 10 years, preferences seem to have shifted generally away from extrinsic references toward the text's intrinsic conventions and senses — specifically, from determinacy to indeterminacy. My object here is to consider two recent contributions to this ancient dispute: Kermode's *The Genesis of Secrecy* and Graff's *Literature Against Itself*. Both raise basic questions about the nature of literature and its critical appropriation; yet, they stand at opposite poles of the dispute.

Secrecy and Pluralism

Kermode's book focuses on the interpretive practice of "midrash," the aim of which, by rewriting the story or by commentary, is "to penetrate the surface and reveal a secret sense; to show what is concealed in what is proclaimed" and in this way to bridge "the gap between an original and a modern audience" (K.x).[5] The general argument is that all texts contain secret senses, and that interpreters divide into two groups: insiders "having or professing to have immediate access to the mystery," and outsiders whose interpretations lack decisive authority. All secular interpreters, he concludes, are outsiders

2. For a brief review of this dispute, see Peter Szondi, "Introduction to Literary Hermeneutics," trans. Timothy Bahti, in *New Literary History* X (Autumn, 1978), pp. 17-28.

3. W.K. Wimsatt, "Genesis: A Fallacy Revisited," in *The Discipline of Criticism*, ed. P. Demetz et al. (New Haven and London, 1968), p. 222. For a slightly different formulation, see "The Intentional Fallacy," in *Sewanee Review*, n. 54 (1946), p. 468.

4. Frank Kermode, *The Genesis of Secrecy: On the Interpretation of Narrative* (Cambridge, 1979); and Gerald Graff, *Literature Against Itself: Literary Ideas in Modern Society* (Chicago, 1979). All references to these books will hereafter be found in the text, within parentheses, in the form of upper-case letters K. and G., respectively, followed by the page number.

5. The book consists of a somewhat expanded version of the six Charles Eliot Norton lectures he delivered at Harvard University in 1977-78, exploring approaches to general problems of interpretation.

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"compelled to agree that secrecy exists"; indeed the texts' resistance to becoming transparent accounts for both the possibility and pleasure of interpretation and also its "necessary disappointment" (K.xi). Kermode thus reconstructs the arguments for indeterminacy and manifold meaning.

Kermode focuses on the New Testament gospels of Mark, Matthew, Luke and John. It is not unusual these days to find theological controversies attracting broad secular interest,[6] nor to find secular critics dealing with sacred texts.[7] Kermode's persistent preoccupation with interpretation has led him inexorably to these texts.

In 1967 Kermode argued that regardless of whether the world is as senseless as the existentialists proposed, human life was committed to the creation of fiction to provide it meaning. He argued that unlike the world, literature could not be "entirely undetermined;" that novels had "beginnings, ends, and potentiality;" and that fiction had to avoid imitative forms if it was to "do justice to a chaotic, viscously contingent reality, and yet redeem it."[8] Furthermore, he considered it "a mistake" to suppose "that no order need be created because the consumer will do this without help if he is given the right encouragement and set in the right situation."[9]

A few years later, Kermode moved closer to the predominant structuralism, in attributing the generation of meaning to reader response. The structure of the text was seen as an empty system of signifiers that took shape after any particular reading.[10] In arguing that the secular modern classic deconstructs any thematic coherence within the conventions it uses, so that coherence can only be provided by the reader, Mr. Kermode points out that the text "is not, like *the book of God . . . of which the senses, though perhaps hidden, are fully determined,* there in full before the interpreter."[11]

In the *Genesis of Secrecy,* Kermode is prepared to look at traditions of biblical exegesis and hermeneutics, and ready to argue that, to a non-ecclesiastical reading by an "outsider," the gospels produce the same pluralities as the secular classics. Here Kermode's interest is confined to the realm of the representation: one purpose of his book is professedly "to reverse that priority" whereby we "ignore *what is written* in favor of *what it is written*

6. Particularly interesting are the controversies surrounding Hans Kung and Edward Schillebeeckx, both part of the reformist wings of the German and Dutch churches. *Time* magazine notes that "John Paul's Vatican is determined to crack down on divisive interpretation of doctrine." See "Not Quite a 'Heresy' Trial," under "Religion," *Time* CXIV (December 24, 1979), p. 53.

7. Cf. Northrop Frye, *The Secular Scripture: A Study in the Structure of Romance* (Cambridge, 1976).

8. *The Sense of an Ending: Studies in the Theory of Fiction* (New York, 1967), pp. 140, 138, 145.

9. *Ibid.,* pp. 167-168.

10. "A Modern Way with the Classic," *New Literary History* V (Spring, 1974), p. 426. See also, *The Classic: Literary Images of Permanence and Change* (New York, 1975), p. 430.

11. "Hawthorne's Modernity," in *Partisan Review,* n. 41 (1974), p. 436 [italics added]. For an alternative critical discussion of this article, see Charles Altieri, "The Hermeneutics of Literary Indeterminacy: A Dissent from the New Orthodoxy," in *New Literary History* X (Autumn, 1978), pp. 71-99.

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about" (K. 118-119). In ranging from microscopic textual variations in the gospels to millennia of biblical exegesis, this book provides not so much actual interpretation as meta-interpretation about their modes, possibilities and disappointments. The opening chapter distinguishes between the "carnal" order of a narrative — generally agreed upon — and the "spiritual" order consisting of widely variant divinations (actualizations of the abstractions of form in meaning)[12] that elucidate latent senses. These divinations can be expected to vary by stressing different dimensions at the expense of others and "bound to ignore much of the information offered by the text" (K. 12). This is an argument for the epistemological indeterminacy of the text as a function of the critical readers' distance and perspective.

In addition to this, there are what might be called logical indeterminacies in the text: those that attract attention by strangeness thus causing "an interruption in the conventional processing of information" (K. 14). According to Kermode, "to be blessedly fallible, to have the capacity to subvert manifest senses, is the mark of good enough readers and good enough texts" (K. 14). Not only does one interpretation not disqualify another, but the patience with hermeneutical pluralism is postulated as an intrinsic value. The fear of dogmatism leads Kermode to welcome the "fallible": when particular divinations are combined with power, that is, when "a privileged interpretation, propounded by an elite believing that it alone has access to the true spiritual sense of a text" results in the spiritual sense being treated as if it were carnal, then matters of life and death may be tragically at stake. Kermode's point is thus that interpretive beliefs must be self-consciously entertained as fictions in order to avoid totalitarian corruption.

In the second chapter, Kermode examines parables from the gospels, treating them as paradigms of narratives that mean more and other than they seem to say, and different things to different people, on account of the contradictions in the statements, nuances, details and proportioning of the text. Thematic indeterminacy is thus added to epistemological and logical indeterminacies. Interpretation, then, is necessary to complete the parable.

In the middle chapters Kermode looks into narrative opacity by focusing on enigmatic textual elements and the interplay between narrative and character. His argument is that owing to supra-literary cultural forces, we have difficulty accepting incoherences and we long "for the well-formed" (K. 65) which is as evident in our attitudes to endings as in our elevation of typological deviance to character and in our thickening and darkening of the narrative until surface fractures become parts of an elaborate hidden design. The argument here is that the interpretation of meaning must begin where structural analysis leaves

12. Divination is Schleiermacher's term (though its pedigree reaches back at least to Plato) for designating how writing affects the writer's soul or how discourse develops language, i.e., the process whereby a particular innovation both realizes and modifies the abstract general system which generated it. Kermode's usage of "divination" implies the oracular mystery of textual "radiance" (one of his most frequently used categories), draws attention to the relation between the profane and the sacred, and ascribes an important but uncertain character to the creative side of criticism which shapes coherent meanings by determining undetected latencies in the text.

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off. In other words, it is part of a more or less explicit debate with the excesses of French structuralism (i.e., the so-called post-structuralist tendency), which, however, takes place within the context of structuralist discourse.

For Kermode, "some or much of a text can and should be processed into coherence, though some, if after careful interpretive effort it resists this treatment, may be left alone, or dealt with in a different way" (K. 54). He rejects the "post-structuralist" notion that an ideal text would be perfectly fortuitous and that readers should produce their own senses wantonly, by inattention, skipping, and other perversities.[13] In this, Kermode understands the prevailing "post-structuralist" truism to assert that "in establishing coherence we reduce the text to codes implanted in our minds by the arbitrary fiat of a culture or an institution, and are therefore the unconscious victims of ideological oppression" (K. 54). He cites Culler [14] to the effect that "closure...testifies to the presence of an ideology" (K. 71).

The post-structuralist argument that Culler reviews and that Kermode apparently refers to is that the search for coherence in a text is a naive and unsalutary practice of projecting a purpose as a center of the text, thus limiting the play of forms and the production of meaning.[15] The counter-project, then, would be to provide a decentered analysis. Saussure's theory of meaning, which asserts that "there are only differences with no positive terms in the linguistic system,"[16] makes it possible to postulate an infinity of relations among terms, all able to generate meanings. From this, Derrida infers that, in the absence of transcendent meaning, there are no limits to the play of signification.[17] The argument resembles Kermode's claim that a text simultaneously proclaims and conceals, but its momentum leads the interpreter past any coherence to the "joyful Nietzschean affirmation of the play of the world and the innocence of becoming." In such a Derridean context, interpretation is valued as an activity rather than for the truth claims of its results. Inasmuch as signifiers are said to bear limitless traces of possible verbal sequences, they always exceed any particular signifieds, so that the sign is endowed with a life of its own, ungoverned by particular genetic, teleological, or conventional constraints. Analysis then is always concerned with demonstrating the free play of the text against the fixations of particular interpretations.

Kermode's objection is that this "post-structuralist vision is impossible to sustain in practice. Here Kermode ultimately agrees with Barthes, Foucault, Derrida, and Culler that in principle meanings and operative conventions are bound together in a cultural circle outside of which there is no meaning.[18]

13. Kermode cites Barthes' suggestion that a novel is new for us on each reading because we skip different parts. Cf. *The Pleasure of the Text*, trans. Richard Miller (New York, 1975), p. 11.
14. Jonathan Culler, *Structuralist Poetics: Structuralism, Linguistics and the Study of Literature* (Ithaca, 1975), p. 244.
15. Cf. Jacques Derrida, *L'Ecriture et la Difference* (Paris, 1967), p. 410.
16. *Cours de linguistique générale*, 3rd ed. (Paris, 1968), p. 166.
17. *Op.cit.*, p. 411.
18. Cf. Culler, *op.cit.*, pp. 253-254; Roland Barthes, *Critique et Vérité* (Paris, 1966), p. 65;

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Indeed, it is possible to note that whatever provisions are selected to generate some meanings, they will simultaneously rule out others. Further, no meaning is possible without some underlying criteria for its coming into being, so that ideology is inescapable. Nor can "limitless play of meaning" be tied to pure chance, for it is impossible even to play games of chance without determination, as it is impossible to have meaning without limits. In this context, the orientation to a totality of possible meanings is itself ideological in its retreat from determinacy.[19]

After having accepted Saussure's model, Kermode hesitates to embrace the free play of signifiers for ideological reasons — a hesitation that becomes more problematic than the post-structuralist position itself. Kermode accepts the digitalization of the text, its apprehension as a system of quantized, abstract functions, but he resists the post-structuralist reprogramming of this pre-text at will through unrestricted digital play before the abstract functions are concretized. Kermode adheres to the notion of form as a *state* of the literary text — available to structural analysts and, where that leaves off, to interpretation. He is not interested in a de-motivating *process* of formal *operations* designed to disengage the text from fixed form and content by way of "playing" with the traces of absent semantic possibilities. In other words, Kermode would rather deal with a version of the author's text rather than with a version of the post-structuralist reader's text. Given the concession he makes to structuralist abstraction, however, this position is difficult to sustain and ideologically revealing. Kermode accepts the structural series of abstract functions as the object for subjective interpretation. Contrary to the post-structuralists, however, who self-consciously abolish or at least defer value, Kermode reproduces the fact-value distinction, with the result that his meta-interpretive theory is bound to shipwreck on the arbitrariness that comes to define the repertoire of interpretations (i.e., the valuations of structural "fact"). In this instance, the sharp fact-value separation *transfers* authority from the synthetic to the analytic, from experience to model. The stabilization of the abstract model as the objective thing to be interpreted ascribes priority and thus ontologizes the discrete, discontinuous, quantified model of structuralism. In this process, Kermode moves from hyper-positivist post-structuralism to the dualism of an existentialist-structuralist problematic, and places coherent qualitative interpretations on the defensive. Interpretation

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Derrida, *L'Ecriture, op.cit.*, p. 46; Michel Foucault, *L'Ordre du Discourse* (Paris, 1971), p. 38.

19. The "post-structuralist" preference for a maximum of meaning is, for all practical purposes, effectively anticipated in New Critical formalism, notwithstanding the former's relentless critiques of the latter. According to John Crowe Ransom, the New Critical "linguistic revolution" in critical interpretation pivots on stressing "the total connotation of words." See "Poetry: I. The Formal Analysis," *The Kenyon Review*, IX (Summer, 1947), p. 436. Cf. Monroe Beardsley: "all the connotations that can be found to fit are to be attributed to the poem: it means all it *can* mean, so to speak." *Aesthetics* (New York, 1958), p. 144. For a discussion of these issues, see my *The Critical Twilight: Explorations in the Ideology of Anglo-American Literary Theory from Eliot to McLuhan* (London, Henley and Boston, 1978), pp. 93-103, esp. pp. 94, 101-102, and p. 244.

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based in qualitative experience is immediately made vulnerable to charges of closing the gaps in the fragmented model it seeks to interpret, i.e., to endow with existential meaning. Is it any wonder that the more continuous interpretation tries to refill the gaps to provide qualitative meaning, the more the discrete units appear to conspire in secrecy? Kermode, for his part, elaborates this methodological dilemma stoically. These are but early skirmishes in our brave new cybernetic world.

In any case, the consequence of his stand against the extremes of structuralist semiotics is that Kermode favors the text's redundancies [20] which restrict its range of senses and make possible some hermeneutical "fore-understanding" of its totality. At the same time, he emphasizes that such fore-understandings may prematurely limit the senses of a work (K. 143), that rigor can turn to violence, and that outsiders to the prevailing ideological institutions "may produce the most radiant interpretations" (K. 71).

In the penultimate section of *The Genesis of Secrecy,* Kermode turns directly to the themes of reference and objective exteriority that are equally central to Graff's concerns and, specifically, to the texts that claim "to be a transparent account of the recognizable world" (K. 101). Accordingly, "no narrative can be transparent on historical fact" because (citing Barthes),[21] *the very fact* itself "can exist only linguistically, as a term in a discourse (although) we behave as if it were a simple reproduction of something or other on another plane of existence altogether, some extra-structural 'reality'" (K. 117). He attacks illusions of reference and the "atavistic preference for truth over meaning" (K. 119) which he takes to favor political authoritarianism.

With this argument, Kermode rejoins the structuralist critique of a culture promoting the fixing of reality to sustain "the fiction that a narrative text may be transparent on fact" (K. 122) and, in so doing, also imposing its ideological biases. Hence his emphasis on "what is written" (meaning) over "what it is written about" (truth). Seeking to align his argument with Derrida's proposal that, although we cannot free ourselves from all conventions and still make sense, we should resist them as far as possible, Kermode presents modern interpretation as involving some effort to divorce meaning and truth. But

20. For an emphasis different from Mr. Kermode's on the subject of redundancies, it is interesting to note Alastair Fowler, "The Selection of Literary Constructs," *New Literary History* VII (Autumn, 1975), p. 49: "Literature's communicative system has resources far richer and more extensive than those of ordinary language. It can bring into play an inexhaustible variety of 'redundancies' or coding rules, among which those of language form only one (and not always even an important) subset. Literary redundancies also include stylistic codes such as poetic diction and contextual allusion, generic conventions on every scale, thematic traditions, and the improvised rules of self-defining contexts. All work together in mutual confirmation: indeed, a high degree of redundancy ('unity,' 'integration') is considered a criterion of art. And when various redundancies combine, they can be astonishingly resistant to the obscuring action of time." It merits observation that Kermode's strictures have implications for redundancy theories of literature, among them Northrop Frye's structural theory of recurring myths or archetypes.

21. "Le Discours de l'Histoire," in *Social Science Information,* VI, 4 (1967), pp. 65-75.

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Kermode's argument stops short here and does not recognize that we also articulate the internal relations of a text through coding procedures and that there is as much possibility of consensus in sharing these as in sharing any other conventions. As a corollary to these concerns, and as a possible anticipation of those "revolutionary new concepts of writing" that might reconcile a theory attractive to him with the current set of practical difficulties in interpretation, Kermode points to the emergence of a new literature of skeptical accounts of "fact," in works like Thomas Pynchon's *The Crying of Lot 49*. In this very denial of a tradition of determinate mimesis, however, in favor of more indeterminate presentations that appear in some sense truer, a certain mimetic bias surfaces to hedge Kermode's bets, and he appears to make a concession to Graff's openly realist contention that new skeptical patterns of literary organization simply represent new conventions.

Kermode's concluding section reviews the compromising tensions of interpreters. According to Kermode, only institutional consensus can judge, at some future point, if immanentist analysis is becoming too permissive of the variances of interpretive response (K. 136-37). But he takes no note that the social process enters interpretation at an ideological level prior to institutional consensus — at a level where the formation of such consensus itself takes place. In effect, he proposes to defer interpretive competition pending the development of a decisive bias in the ideological balance of forces. Meanwhile, "the desires of interpreters are good because without them the world and the text are tacitly declared to be impossible; perhaps they are, but we must live as if the case were otherwise" (K. 126). Thus, while interpreters seek to work as insiders, they confront the predicament of outsiders, their pleasure, before the inevitable disappointment, being the perception of a momentary radiance.

Kermode's position could be described as an existentialism with a structuralist substratum. One could equally call it phenomenological criticism, or structuralism with a bad conscience, or existentialism in bad faith. His position regarding the desirable labors of Sisyphus-interpreters leaves him less vulnerable than his earlier formulations to arguments that in writing, reading, or other action, some conventions must unavoidably be invested with privileged authority.[22] But Kermode remains epistemologically and culturally skeptical. In this sense, he may still be charged with a relativism that undermines the value of literature and interpretation and, consequently, of humanism in a world already too unreceptive to it, although, to be fair, his critics would have to show that they are not naive with respect to his meta-interpretive dilemmas.

Literature and Objective Rationality

Graff is one of Kermode's most severe critics. Much of *Literature Against Itself* is a skillful accumulation of evidence to support his argument about the direction in which literary discussion is evolving. Against this evolution, Graff laments the decline of mimesis and reference in literature, and of coherence in

22. See Fredric Jameson, "Demystifying Literary History," *New Literary History* V (Spring, 1974), pp. 610-612.

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culture, while calling for the reinvigoration of rational concern with the truth of what a discourse is about. Where Kermode finds Kafka's parable of the man outside the doors of "the law," with is limited perceptions of radiance, to be emblematic of the interpreter's dilemma and reward, Graff is more at home with Joseph K.'s objection that the operative conventions of "the law" turn lying into a universal principle. His presentation pivots on the claims of objective reason and measures their neglect against their indispensability to a viable culture and society.

In Graff's view the crisis of rationality has been deepening continually since Romanticism. The modernism and post-modernism of the 20th century is the end result of skepticism about the possibilities of objective understanding of the reality outside linguistic constructs. In the tradition of Raymond Williams, Graff shows that the greatest claims of the romantic doctrine of the creative imagination were wedded to its greatest weaknesses. The impotence of art, accordingly, is said to have been implicit in Shelley's legislative assumptions: "The concept of an autonomous creative inspiration which fabricates the forms of order, meaning, and value which men no longer thought they could find in external nature, implicitly — if not necessarily intentionally — concedes that artistic meaning is a fiction, without any corresponding object in the extra-artistic world" (Graff, 35).

Structuralists tend to agree on the description, and often credit the romantics with discovering the gaps between language and things. By contrast, Graff challenges the whole subsequent modernist and post-modernist tradition which he takes to be built on such premises and to be opposed to the best interests of literature and its cognitive mission: "at the very moment when external forces have conspired to deflate the importance and truth of literature, literary theory delivers the final blow itself" (G. 26). According to Graff, today this division between the objective world and the realm of meanings is confirmed by actively associating objective thought with instrumentalist, alienating forms of technology, commerce, bureaucracy, and social engineering. The result is the rejection of objective thought, as it is becoming increasingly the case within literary culture. Making virtue of necessity, modernism glorifies the creativity of the literary construction of meaning and postulates the ever greater relevance of art to life. Graff sees the New Critic's assumptions of the "objective" nature of the literary text as essentially continuous with such constructivist modernist premises. Although the logic of his argument leads him to underestimate the assimilation of the New Criticism to scientistic imperatives, Graff rightly points to the contradictory character of the New Critic's doctrine of literary objectivity. New Criticism defined meaning as embedded in literary structure and the work was described as objective, self-sufficient, non-referential, irreducible. On the other hand, New Criticism insisted that literature is a form of genuine knowledge and claimed that the work corresponded objectively to the real nature of things.

According to Graff, "the doctrine of the objectivity of literature was

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ambiguous: it might be invoked in order to close the work off from the objective world or to point the work back toward this world" (G. 142). This latter, however, still leaves the experience of an autonomous artifact divorced from conceptual articulation. Moreover, the New Criticism undermines its method of verbal explication: according to the theory, critical analysis is bound to fall short of encompassing the objective literary work. What separates the literary object from the world also separates criticism from its object. Having subverted the authority of interpretation, it is a short step to the post-modernist rejection of interpretation as such, or the transformation of interpretation into creative "Nietzschean 'play' that makes no pretense of corresponding to any text" (G. 143).

Graff's point is that post-modernism reverses the values of modernism but shares its premises. In other words, given the separation of meaning and reference, and given the artificial character of meaning and its conventions, it becomes as logical to deplore the arbitrariness of meaning as to applaud its creativity. In this reading, romanticism has given rise to a skepticism which, in a self-conscious and militant moment, comes to repudiate literature and the pretensions of interpretation. At some point, both art and the world are simply considered to *exist*, without need for normative justification. The search for understanding and the subsequent search for meaning are both replaced by "a celebration of *energy* — the vitalism of a world that cannot be understood or controlled" (G. 58).

Going beyond mainstream traditions, Graff argues that left-wing cultural critics likewise divorce literature from understanding, and experience from objective thought. Graff's objection is that in criticizing rationality as such, instead of criticizing the ideology of institutionalized rationality; in repudiating mimesis as repressively tying language to a predetermined order of reality, instead of repudiating the way things are or a particular set of linguistic conventions — cultural radicalism delegitimates its own critiques and undermines political discourse that depends on shared linguistic contracts (G. 85, 88-89).

Graff concludes that the whole project of cultual radicalism has substituted for the legitimate goals of bringing about "greater truth and justice" the diversion of "a spurious quest after psychic liberation" (G. 101). Although Graff has perhaps underestimated the import of the revolt of subjectivity against authoritarian objectivism, he is right in linking a radical project to the problem of rationality — provided he is envisaging here a new rationality (which is not at all clear from the tenor of his relentlessly Puritan anti-libidinalism).

Graff focuses on "the visionary view," a kind of "formalism on the offensive" which, in distinguishing literature from external reality, heralds the appropriation of the latter by the former, calling into question the entire opposition between the imaginative and the real to the point where "reality" itself is taken to be a fiction constructed and defined by the autonomous imagination and its categories (G. 13-14). Such a theory of fiction neutralizes

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any statement, inasmuch as by pre-empting reference to anything that is not a fiction, it provides no way to discriminate intelligently among fictions. Indeed, if it is to be taken as a fiction, such a theory undermines the significance of its own statements. The notion that "reality" is a "fiction" because all accounts of it are fictitious in character has its roots in a theory that defines language as incapable of referring to anything external to itself. If sign and empirical reality can never coincide — and this is what leads Kermode to focus on "what is being said" instead of "what it is being said about" — that is, if signs acquire their meanings from systems of conventions and are referable only to these systems, then "all meaning is open and undecidable and bears no stable relation to its apparent origin or object" (G. 173-74).

Given such premises, some structuralist critics propose to "deconstruct" language to expose as ideological fictions its pretensions to being referential or mimetic. Other post-modernist critics contrast literature to "everyday language" as the one form of language that does not blind itself to the gap between language and the world, and increasingly calls attention to its mediating conventions.[23] If the real world and literature are both fiction, then criticism too is a fiction. Since literature is taken to be indeterminate, the critics' predicament is to venture into this fictive indeterminacy of the text, either to complete or complement it with further fictions (Kermode) or to deconstruct its forms and expose its pretensions, or to show that the text deconstructs itself (de Man).

Graff argues against this tradition on two levels: by defending claims for propositional mimetic reference and, polemically, by postulating the futility of anti-realist humanism. Graff accuses the anti-realist revision of traditional humanism of subverting the humanist mission to challenge cognitively the main thrust of practical life. Believing that "literature ought to play an adversary role in society" (G. 2),[24] Graff shares Trilling's and Enzensberger's assessment that "the adversary culture has been largely assimilated, domesticated, and trivialized by mass education and the media" (G. 110). Adversary culture is to be blamed for this reconciliation with the industrial and commercial order. Avant-garde intellectuals unwittingly provide ideological cover for that continuous disruption of the sense of reality typical of advanced capitalism, "the real 'avant-garde'...with its built-in need to destroy all vestiges of tradition, all orthodox ideologies, all continuous and stable forms of reality in order to stimulate higher levels of consumption" (G. 8).

In short, "puritanical bourgeois rationalism" is no longer the cultural counterpart of consumer capitalism which has itself eliminated these repressions that the cultural vanguard is ostensibly still seeking to dissolve (G. 95, 119). Consumer capitalism requires a "culture of perpetual metamorphosis" (G. 119). Thus, it presupposes and promotes the destruction

23. Cf. Paul de Man, *Blindness and Insight: Essays in the Rhetoric of Contemporary Criticism* (New York, 1971), pp. 17-18.

24. For a hostile commentary see the review of *Literature Against Itself* by Irvin Ehrenpreis, "Lit in Trouble," *The New York Review of Books*, XXVI (June 28, 1979), p. 41.

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of continuity, the disorientation of the senses, the defamiliarization of perception and understanding, the assault on hierarchically ordered thinking, the malleability of both the physical and spiritual environments, and the erosion of our assurance of reality as well as of our ability to recognize and see it as harmful (G. 92-93). In this context, the literary avant-garde not only is not an oppositional force, but it itself can be seen as an expression of consumer culture.

The implication is that as public reality became ambiguous and strange, literary thinking elevated estrangement to the level of a principle and gave up on understanding. As gaps opened between language and experience, literary thinking elevated the gaps to the level of a principle and gave up on mimesis. Graff thus accounts for the prominence of the anti-realist tradition in such a way that what that tradition might see as its own choices are seen rather in terms of a realist paradigm. According to Graff, paradoxically, mimesis is alive and well, since "conventions of reflexivity and anti-realism are themselves mimetic of the kind of unreal reality that modern reality has become. But 'unreality' in this sense is not a fiction but the element in which we live" (G. 180). This account, of course, would be challenged by Kermode and others who, in turn, can similarly explain Graff's claim to have discovered the mimetic identity of anti-realist conventions and of consumer capitalism. The truth claims of Graff's position would be bracketed since he did not discover but "divined" the homologies he describes: his version of consumer society is simply his account of reality against which he compares his account of anti-realist conventions. The correspondence he proposes can be traced to the particular ideological coding he assigns privileged authority to in constructing his texts.

In other words, Graff's argument -- as he recognizes (G. 199) — does not establish its own grounding or refute the anti-realist position. Yet, as an ideological position, his argument may be compelling and successful in attaining some critical consensus. I share Graff's view that recent developments have resulted in a peculiar reconciliation of earlier antagonisms, but I think he overstates the derangement pursued in consumer culture for the sake of change, and underestimates the extent of the rationalization that the society attempts to institute. In any case, one can argue for the urgency of reconstituting literary thought in terms of a genuine and uncompromising contemporary humanism.

Graff formulates this more narrowly as "reconstructing the grounds of humanistic knowledge" (G. 181). He argues that for "greater truth and justice" we do not need "a new cultural sensibility, a 'new sensorium,' a reorientation of perception, an 'a-logical' celebration of being, a release of 'will and joy' and Eros, a flight beyond humanism and the logocentric view of man" (G. 100-191). Yet, without disparaging rationality, I would argue that patriarchy, authoritarianism, and elitism remain important adversaries to challenge, that objective truth and distributive justice are ideas bound to the paradigm of scarcity and that, contrary to his denial, the liberation of Eros and the pleasure

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principle is a desirable counterpart of the revolt against injustice. The emphasis on libidinal dimensions, for example on the eroticism of the text in exploring communicative symbols, is strange not only to Graff but also to Kermode who, in this regard, takes his distance from what he calls "bolder views." If current society, including most verbal accounts of it, is at all desublimated, it is arguably desublimated repressively; we can surely do more and better. In other words, Graff's "reconstruction" is closer than one would wish to what he takes to be the critical rationalism latent in traditional humanism.

Graff is committed to an external order of objects existing independently of our perceptions, languages, ideologies and myths. This order is knowable and, on that basis, altered (G. 27). Against the various *constructivist* notions of the *shaping* powers of the imagination, Graff insists on the imagination's objective truth claims as a *recording* that *corresponds* to reality, *matching* rather than *making*, *mimesis* rather than *poesis*, *reference* rather than autonomous *invention*.[25] Graff confronts the challenge to realism which proposes that "'reality,' as we experience it, is *always already* interpreted, *already* constructed, *already* constituted by the methodological models, paradigms, sign-systems and conventions through which it is given to us." Not being such a naive realist as to hold that objects leave their traces directly on a passive mind, Graff is prepared to grant that an active process of interpretation brings into being the reality of our experience. At the same time, his project is to validate "the appeal to a 'common objective reality' outside all perspectives" (G. 193-195). Like his 'anti-realist' adversaries, he works to distinguish between reality as such and reality-as-we-experience-it, but, unlike them, he aims to substitute for the reality of experience — that is "already constructed" by prior interpretation — an earlier reality "already entirely constituted" prior to the moment when interpretation begins.

Graff argues as follows. First, the fact that all experience and meaning are paradigm-bound and system-constituted may establish the mediating role of conventions as "certainly a *necessary* condition of generating meanings, but it can hardly be a *sufficient* condition" (G. 196). In other words, while language always refers to itself and statements are dependent for their meaning on the codes and grammars that construct them, there may be more to meaning: linguistic statements may *also* refer beyond language and be answerable to something external to their conventions. Thus, Graff proposes the *possibility of external reference*.

Secondly, both writers and readers need not only be equipped with

25. Ultimately, it may be that these polarizations are pure inverses of one another and hence share the same structural reliance on a contemplative rationalist epistemology in which subject and object are each abstracted from dynamic experience which makes them and their range of combinations possible, and are then posited as facing each other with the status of acheived immediacies. The range of observational perspectives, then, from militancy to skepticism of either a subjectivist or objectivist kind, expresses a range of strategic topographic and optical placements with a range of different horizons but a common grounding in reified abstraction from the lifeworld of human social existence.

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conventions but also choose which among them are to be applied. This argument that "conventions are not self-activating but require external agency" (G. 198) leads to a theory of external motivation. Texts bear marks of reference that embody authorial intention. These are either manifest in texts or latent properties actualized through the reader's interpretive conventions. Thus, "interpretation is co-determined by the text as well as by an arbitrary system of conventions" (G. 198).

Since Graff believes that the mission of literature is critical, he is committed to making the text answerable to the world outside its conventions. That the literary text coerces the critical interpretation of it anticipates the argument to be made for mimesis, to the effect that objective reality coerces that imaginative construction that is the literary text. Here the position is a more assertive complement to the first argument and proposes the *indispensability of external reference*. Graff's basic contention, that conventionality is not arbitrary in the sense of random indeterminacy, is an important insight and corrective to all theories inspired by the views of the sign and signification that prevail in structural linguistics. It promises to thaw the frozen form separating language systems from the warmth of practical human activity.[26] Unfortunately, Graff develops his argument in such a manner as to replace frozen form with an equally frozen "objective" content, with the result that conventionality continues to appear arbitrary, but now in the sense of despotic determinacy.

Having argued that interpretation is coerced by objectivity as well as by a system of conventions, Graff's third contention is that "the antithesis between 'constructing' and 'recording'. . . is unreal, for it opposes a genetic category to a logical one; it confuses the process by which formulations come into being (constructing) and the logical status of these formulations (recording)" (G. 199). In other words, whatever may be the subjective elements of design governing the production of a text this "tells us nothing about the work's adequacy or inadequacy as a representation of reality" (G. 199), i.e., about its truth or falsehood. In proposing, therefore, that convention and correspondence are not mutually exclusive concepts, Graff proposes the logical *possibility of mimesis*.

But then, fourthly, the argument moves on to insist that any construct can actually be tested and justified or falsified, not against other constructs, but with regard to their correspondence to what he calls "unrefutable facts" of experience. Of course, if it were the case that mimetic correspondence to the given facts served as the practical measure of the truth of any construct, then

26. For a general discussion which proposes that there is a "dynamic fusion" of formal element and meaning element within the sign as a result of the process of social development, so that the relations within the sign may be conventional, but neither arbitrary nor fixed, see Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford 1977), pp. 36-38. The argument follows up on the work of V.N. Volosinov in *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language,* 2nd ed. (1930), trans. Matejka and Titunik (New York and London, 1973). Williams notes that "the conversion of the 'sign'...into either fixed content or fixed form is a radical denial of active practical consciousness" (p. 39).

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humanist constructs aiming at truth would be accountable to the objectivity of the facts (even where, as in an objectivist version of Marcuse's views, the "facts" of reality were assessed as "false" so that "truth" was sought in the determinate negation of those "facts"). By identifying literary value with objective knowledge within an epistemology of correspondence, Graff argues for binding literary constructs to the given facts, i.e., for the *necessity of mimesis*. While agreeing that literary constructs operate through a variety of humanly created conventions, and therefore disclaiming the naive view of them as mirrors or copies, Graff nevertheless stresses their accountability to the facts.

The key to the argument lies in the procedures for testing. The issues involved are known to philosophers of science through the distinction between the "context of discovery" and the "context of justification" — a distinction upheld by prominent philosophers like Feigl and Popper, but considered invalid or misleading by, e.g., Feyerabend, Kuhn, and Polanyi. The latter argue that the process of testing and justification is as paradigm-bound as the process that produced the construct being tested, that neither process has priority, and that each can be and often is overruled by the other. Graff relies heavily on Popper's falsification theory [27] in support of the notion that, through repeated trial and error, our knowledge of the world "owes as much to the resisting reality as to our self-produced ideas" (G. 204). In particular, Graff contends that while all facts are paradigm-bound, a particular paradigm and the facts it constitutes can be tested against facts that are independent of the particular paradigm in question (being, as it were, constituted by other paradigms). Facts so constituted acquire authority as "unrefutable" facts when they "cross-check successfully with so many possible paradigms and conflict with so few of those that we have yet encountered that we feel safe in concluding that they correspond to the way things are" (G. 203). Thus, a new theoretical or literary construct can be taken to have passed the test of correspondence if it cross-checks successfully with disparate facts whose conventionality, and beyond that, ideological character, have been bracketed on the assumption that these correspond to the objective content of reality.

It is important to note the leap that Graff makes here from the accepted facts of experience to "the way things are," i.e., from facts confirmed or unfalsified by *many* perspectives to "objective reality *outside all* perspectives." Such a leap makes a dogmatic doctrine out of the *popularity* of the instituted cosmology and the ideologies that support the basic facts, and is especially vulnerable to criticism from literary theorists who are concerned with the *valued* facts and paradigms of literature that would suffer — even more than the comparatively disanthropomorphized constructs of science — from being validated or invalidated on the basis of correspondence to established valuations. In bracketing the established underlying conventions that constitute the prevailing "unrefutable facts," and hence the active human orientations and

27. See *Objective Knowledge: An Evolutionary Approach* (London, 1972), p. 68, n. 31, and pp. 310-318 for the theory of correspondance.

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practices that support those conventions, such a doctrine advances privileged (and unwarranted) ontological authority to what it brackets. The history of changes in both scientific and literary conventions suggests that falsification by basic facts is neither acceptable nor accepted in the real process. No interesting theory ever agrees with all the facts, quantitatively or qualitatively, and such a requirement would stand in the way of the generation of new constructs and would wipe out both science and literature if it allowed them to begin in the first place. "Unrefutable facts" would eliminate new constructs that were not based on the older cosmologies; and placing the burden of proof on the new construct when tested against the "facts" amounts to little more than taking for granted the unexamined ideology supporting those "facts." There is no doubt that whatever is deeply established will provide serious resistance to threatening innovation; but as long as conflict remains, the former cannot be granted an absolute ontological priority over the latter.[28]

In other words, while conventionality and correspondence may not be mutually exclusive and genetic relations may be compatible with logical relations, as Graff argues, they are not *necessarily* so. If human knowledge is part of the praxis of a society, if the world is only given to us through subjective mediation, it seems irrelevant and transcendental to propose that it also corresponds to an "objectivity" independent of human life.[29] It would be more helpful to develop sophisticated historical theories of objectifying praxis, of objectifications and traditions, i.e., of the process of the institution of social reality and social imaginary significations.[30]

What can be said of theory in general is even more applicable to literature, where new constructs do not invalidate earlier ones, and can only be expected to account for their own world of facts, and where the meanings they propose and their pragmatic ramifications invite assessment in terms of desirability rather than truth. At any rate, meaning in literature cannot be derived from knowledge in the sense of correspondence to objects. The value of literature as a humanist activity may lie precisely in its construction of its valued facts in such a way as to provide an alternative or supplement to the "objective" facts, or to assimilate them to the subject pole, in response to the Kierkegaardian suspicion that objective observation might weaken one's "strength as a human being."[31]

A further complication in Graff's argument for literary mimesis and accountability is his view that literary reference is propositional and invites belief in a *conceptual statement* which a work asserts as true to the facts. His position is that while the "literal" level of fiction may make no truth claims, at

28. The preceding anti-Popperian arguments drawing on the philosophy of science can be found elucidated with detail and force in Paul K. Feyerabend, *Against Method* (London, 1975), pp. 165-169 and passim. These are, generally speaking, arguments that Graff would recognize and treat derisively (e.g., G. 137), but they seem decisive nonetheless.

29. Cf. Mihaly Vajda, "Marxism, Existentialism, Phenomenology: A Dialogue," *Telos* n. 7

30. Cf., in particular, the work of the Budapest School on objectifications, esp. Agnes Heller, *A mindennapi elet* (*Everyday Life*, Budapest, 1970.) See also Cornelius Castoriadis, *L'Institution Imaginaire de la société* (Paris, 1975).

31. Sören Kierkegaard, *Papirer*, ed. Heiberg, VII, Pt. 1, Sec. A, N. 182. Cited in Feyerabend, *op.cit.*, p. 175.

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the "symbolic" level the literary work asserts thematic propositions endowed with the same kind of truth claims as ordinary propositions outside of literature. Although Graff agrees with Brooks' argument for the organic unity of the literary work against the "heresy of paraphrase" committed in any attempt to abstract a proposition from a work and treat it as the work's message, he simply absorbs the dramatic unity of the textual organism into a higher logical order of concept or theory implied by the work as a whole and necessary for the reader's assimilation of it. Graff claims that once one arrives at a meaning, it makes a statement that can be cross-checked with the facts to discover its credibility. Indeed, the more contemporary writing cuts away explicit narrative and thematic connections, the more the reader will struggle "to conceive abstract ideas that adequately subsume and connect the disparate events of the reading experience" (G. 165).

Graff is completely unsympathetic to warnings that any particular coherence that subsumes all disparities is governed by acquired foreknowledge with ideological underpinnings. Further, he rejects any suggestion that the drive to coherence in general may be culture-bound. He sees such suspicions as challenges to the synthesizing conceptual rationalism that he espouses and he describes the skepticism about coherence as itself culture-bound. [32]

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32. The issues raised in this dispute concerning textual indeterminacy are not likely to be rapidly resolved. They were familiar to the New Critics forty years ago. Against Cleanth Brooks, W.M. Urban, symbolic form theorists in general, John Crowe Ranson advanced his pluralist poetics (anticipating, as in some respects his opponents did as well, current structuralist theories). Ransom proposed that "the vocation *par excellence* of criticism" was to distinguish the determinate and indeterminate elements of meaning in the work of art. (*The New Criticism,* Norfolk, Conn., 1941, pp.300-302.) While granting that a poem is not included in its paraphrase, Ransom distinguished between the propsitional core structure of a poem and its surplus of free imagery, its extra-propositional texture. In other words. contrary to Brooks (and Kermode), he argued that the text contains a logical statement as a *part* of it; contrary to Brooks (and Graff), he argued that the text contains contingent significations that cannot (should not) be drawn functionally into a total unification, whether performative (organic) or constative (logical). Ransom adopted this mechanical pluralism as the most suitable response to the pressures of the period; with some methodological sophistication, it could perhaps be updated to serve just as well today. (For my discussion of Ransom's variations on the determinate-indeterminate dichotomy, see *The Critical Twilight,* pp. 93-98.) Aristotelian critics like R.S. Crane, and other formalists like W.K. Wimsatt, adopted arguments against Ransom similar to the one with which Graff seeks to supplement Brooks, i.e. to effect that much of what Ransom considers contingent texture would become part of the determinate structure if he made his paraphrases of the thematic arguments more fully qualified. Ransom's response, drawing attention to the *possibility* and the *coercion* of closure, is that, of course, the concrete detail will not appear partly extraneous to the universal concept "if we won't let it; that is if we keep qualifying the concept...by every bit of the poem's concreteness, for then it becomes tautological to say that all the detail qualifies the concept." This controversy is cited in "The Concrete Universal: Observations on the Understanding of Poetry," *The Kenyon Review,* XVI (Autumn, 1954), p. 557 and in *The Critical Twilight,* p.224, n. 41. Graff would say that the coercion derives from reality; Kermode, that the coercion is introduced by the currently necessary evil of interpretive paradigms and perspectives which, if viewed with the pluralist skepticism and without concern for reference, will be seen also to deepen the occultness of the text; Nietzschean "post-structuralists," that the coercion is unjustified ideological violence which must be resisted (deferred) as long as possible.

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Conclusion

Different fears produce different orientations. Graff is concerned that "real life," persons, objects and institutions that support the multiplicity of human messages, may become lost in an infinite regress of textuality. Kermode is concerned that the freedom to construct symbolically what the dominant features of reality are incapable of generating may become lost in the ultimate contexts assumed in the intentions of privileged rationality. Both, therefore, attempt to abstract from the ideological universe in which we live: Kermode, by refusing to admit the reference of one human objectifying activity to others, and Graff by insistently coding such reference with objective status. One overstates indeterminacy, the other, determinacy, and neither one is moved to theorize literature and interpretation as *mediations*, ideologically coded interventions in the process of human self-construction. What tends to happen at the polarities of modern literary thought is that an overly rigid rationality principle and an indiscriminate irrationalism complement (and presuppose) each other: an insistence on objective ordering is countered by a rejection of all ordering; a relativism of interpretation is countered by stress on authoritative objective criteria of comparison (rather than by a self-conscious choice of interpretive criteria identifiable as a specific mediation). Neither Kermode's nor Graff's positions are quite polar; yet it is evident from them that the withdrawal of reliable authority from verbal systems in this century has given new force to the ancient quarrel about textual determinacy.

It may be that the debasement of meaning in our time has induced in many quarters of literary thought a swerving away from meaning. It is possible to view with sympathy the burdens of renewing meaning in face of permanent corrosion, yet to feel that the abdication from this task has come too soon. Structuralism apparently testifies to the corruption of literary and cultural languages and to the gaps that are evidently widening between words and things, between concepts and experiences. But structuralism appears prepared to accept the gaps and to denounce their closure by way of habitual connections — to the point where the gap between "appearance" and "essence" widens to such an extent that the latter is abandoned even as a regulative idea and consigned to illusion, with the result that reality is taken to be pure surface, i.e., it is ontologized nominalistically. Conversely, objectivist realism presupposes what is at best a theoretical ideal and historically not now available: the existence of a common culture with a shared authoritative rationality that can generate universally agreed significations with the capacity to close the gaps within the sign and between signs and things.

It is interesting to note that while Graff's critical rationalism sees the text as an objectively determined construction of objective reality, Kermode's structuralist hermeneutic regards the text as constituted by subjective divinations from a sign system consisting of manifold objective relations that compose a pre-text. In other words, we are dealing with varieties of objectivisms, whether they direct attention to the objective pretext or the objective context. Subjectivity is seen as secondary and lacking in authority,

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whether its destiny is plotted comically as being justified or falsified by the objective context, or satirically as an existentially motivated pursuit of objectivity, doomed, in spite of a momentary attainment, to inevitable disappointment. Ironically, the pursuit of objectivity seems to give rise to an "arbitrary" subjectivity, both absolute and ungrounded in its authority with respect to the ideal order of abstractions posited by structuralist or critical rationalism as the order of objectivity.

Benjamin noted that, in the age of mechanical reproduction, works of art are irremediably separated from their origins and therefore become politicized, i.e., available for subjective manipulation in their reception.[33] At the same time, while the text may no longer be able to guarantee the mode of its appropriation, it is not seen as a dead objectivity open to inscription by subjectivity in any manner *ad libitum*. Indeed, Benjamin's sociology of art breaks ground in suggesting that artists seek to provide for anticipated reception by incorporating the conditions of reception among the formal intentions of the work. In other words, the text is not innocent either in its construction or in its reception. At the same time, it is an objectification which, at least to some extent, determines the possible sphere of its reception.

With this, Kermode and Graff might both agree. Beyond this point Graff stresses the continuity of subjectivity and objectivity; Kermode stresses the discontinuity between them. At the same time, both agree on the Saussurean notion that conventional verbal meanings arise from the play of differences among the terms within the linguistic system. Of fundamental importance here is the concession that is being made to a view of language as discrete and discontinuous in character. The continuities entailed in interpretation by synthetic reason necessarily appear of a different logical order from the discontinuities posited by analytic reason as the structure. On this basis, Kermode, opting to leave conventions arbitrary and choosing to do without the aid of referential contextualization, is led to a stoical agnosticism regarding comparative valuation of the arbitrary authority of the various internally coherent collocations of signs that can be patterned by divining subjectivity. From this agnostic standpoint, claims that such synthetic continuities can be not only consistent but referentially true are dismissed as meta-interpretive dogmatism; this standpoint, in turn, is dismissed by Graff as meta-interpretive skepticism. Opting to coerce or fix the conventions, Graff proposes that a concrete synthetic intentionality oriented to truth invests the analytic abstractions from the start; and he then has strategic recourse to an objective referential context to provide external motivation for a determinate and exhaustively coherent location of disparate signs that will correspond to the referential context. The synthesizing reason that constructs the text, is inscribed in the text, appropriated by the reader, and is said to be coerced at every step by objective reality and fulfilled as objective reason. The problem

33. See "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (New York, 1968), pp. 219-253.

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with this strategy is that it takes no note of the unfulfilled projections of subjectivity and therefore the "truth" for which it argues is reduced to an empty tautology.

From two different viewpoints, a shared distrust of ideology drives Kermode and Graff toward opposed resolutions: the sharp separation of subject from object (with a corresponding loss of authority) versus the objective identity of subject and object (endowed with objective authority). In both cases, the authority attached to subjectivity is traced back to its relations with some objectivity that is accorded priority. If we are satisfied with neither a skeptical nor a dogmatic solution to the problems of human inquiry, it is possible to restore relative constituting independence to subjectivity (active human process), and some authority therefrom, by developing a more positive orientation to the ubiquity of ideological paradigms and greater confidence in the cognitive horizons of what may be called the "heremeneutic circle" which offers to circumscribe the partial identity of subject and object, the partial unity of the particular and the general, and the partial continuity of continuity and discontinuity.

The synecdochic conventions of the modern hermeneutic schools emphasize the "hermeneutic circle," which Ricoeur describes as "an insuperable structure of knowledge when it is applied to human things." Typically, the method involved in tracing this circle and working within it derives from the basic principle that wholes and parts can be understood only in relation to one another, and from the basic problem that the foreknowledge of wholes on which making sense of parts depends is largely constructed from our present understanding of the parts. The method, therefore, consists in a sequence of provisional approaches to the meanings of wholes and parts in terms of each other, producing guesses and interpretations, corrections and more corrections, validated by probabilistic argumentation.

The "subjective" and the "objective" components are not finalities but mediations grounded in experience, which is what makes them and their combination possible. The "subjective" component constructs its heterogeneous objective satisfactions while the "objective" one constructs the sphere of possibility within which subjective choices must move. At the same time, these intermediations entail a complement of indeterminacy in that subjective choices always have several (objective) senses (satisfactions), without any one of them having absolute priority. In other words, inasmuch as subjective mediations ("making") are from the start part of the given, multi-layered ambiguities are intrinsic to the very structure of the given and guarantee a plurality of interpretations. One may argue, in this context, that the heremeneutic circle need be neither vicious nor a limitation of truth. It can be built around the principle of the mediated character of all immediacy, and the elucidations it allows of some coherences in the common situation of subject and object, critic and text, may be ascribed a status that is inextricably both *a priori* and *a posteriori*.

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It is possible to go in at least two directions from here toward some provisionally viable notions of reason and its limits with respect to the problems of interpretation. Both avoid skepticism and dogmatism; where they diverge in emphasis is according to whether one believes that in our time preference should be given to reason and its rules for identifying (choosing), and mobilizing consensus toward, some preferred set of objective possibilities given in our situation; or whether one believes that in our time preference should be given to the widest proliferation of perspectives as not only a catalyst for but as also a criterion of progress. In other words, in searching for "the good" within a framework of the structural unity of the determinate and the indeterminate, one can choose to stress, relatively speaking, either term according to whether one's ethical orientation at a given juncture is linked more strongly to cognitive-instrumental values or to aesthetic values. In either case, literature and interpretation can be regarded as objective and subjective mediations of *what is humane*, with variable stress on proposing a desirable hierarchy of values or proposing a desirable diversification of values.

In the first, relatively more rationalistic direction, Jameson's corrective to Kermode may be helpful. The two agree that there are no longer absolutely privileged interpretations of anything and yet that we privilege specific explanatory codes whenever we deal with things. The issue is whether one should grant belief to the codes of one's choice. Kermode prefers to suspend belief. Jameson holds that at least momentary belief in the existence and ultimately determining validity of some privileged order of explanation is "as indispensable as it is unthinkable." Jameson's argument, then, is that the whole problem should be contextualized within social history, where "perhaps it would turn out that what we have been calling privileged interpretive codes are in fact a function of ideology, in the largest sense, and one of the classical ways in which literature is called upon to play an active part — conservative or critical — in social life."[34]

It seems to me that, without having to accept any particular sense of social class and the structure of capitalism, one can develop a sense of a socializing network constituted by the circulation of Pascalian "wagers." Ideology, in the widest sense, and without pejorative connotations, is always a conflict of ideologies: its forms articulate the conflicts in the social process. In history and in life there is no absolutely objective place to stand and the codings of our utterances take on ideological character from our relative positioning and projects. Ideologies articulate objective being synecdochically but not exhaustively; we do not know if the truth content of our ideologies will be ultimately justified or falsified in history any more than we can guarantee the outcome of the social conflicts that they represent and disseminate. At the same time, based in our fundamental choices, we live out our ideologies with conviction because there is nothing else: this is the element in which our lives are lived and in which we are at stake, and we, with varying degress of self-

34. Jameson, *loc.cit.*

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consciousness, bet that our ideologies speak of reality. In history we may be vindicated or not, in part or in whole, briefly, at length, or from time to time. It is both possible and necessary on such a basis to construct a viable lifestyle, in particular since value, meaning, and commitment are not derivatives of knowledge, even though knowledge can guide their application.

As to the authority of interpretation, where ideological coding is regarded as a constitutive mediation rather than an objectivistic representation, the authority of a privileged order of explanation is a function of its relative placement among others, of its institutional supports, and of its adequacy to the energies released in the process of signification mediated by its adequacy to a project whose horizons and desirability can be elucidated with conviction and offered as a bond to consensus. In any case, since the world is never given to us twice, once through subjective mediation and once apart from such mediation, it is no more difficult (and no different) to choose between one truth and another than to choose (in another epistemological system) between the only truth and the false ideas opposed to it: in both cases one chooses the future, and "truth" becomes a function of beauty and desire, and linguistic coding not a barrier but an invitation to bonding.

In the second, relatively more anti-rationalistic direction, Feyerabend's Millsian corrective to Popperian philosophy of science may be helpful. On the principle of diversity as a value and on a decision to respect contingent truths and not let the balance of ideological forces determine the universal truth or falsehood of particular paradigms, Feyerabend prefers an *ad hoc* method that situates particularity in the context of an ecumenical inter-mediation of achieved human values. The principle of "anything goes" is advanced as the barrier against impoverishing the wealth of historical reality. With regard to interpretation, this position points not to a skepticism about comparisons for lack of objective criteria, but to a romanticism of pluralistic methodology devoted to comparing ideas with ideas (rather than with "the facts" of experience), with the aim of improving through elaboration, rather than discarding, the less favored views. The aim here, contrary to the quantitative maximum implied in structural linguistics, is at a qualitative maximum of meaning. A series of interpretations then would not be regarded as self-consistent theories that are either incapable of comparison or that are of credible interest only where they converge toward an ideal view. Knowledge in general, in this conception, would be rather "an ever increasing *ocean of mutually incompatible* (*and perhaps even incommensurable*) *alternatives*, each single theory, each fairy tale, each myth that is part of the collection forcing the others into greater articulation and all of them contributing, via this process of competition, to the development of our consciousness. Nothing is ever settled, no view can ever be omitted from a comprehensive account.... Experts and laymen, professionals and dilettanti, truth-freaks and liars — they are all invited to participate in the contest and to make their contribution to the enrichment of our culture." [35] In other words, the proposition is that, at this

35. Feyerabend, *op.cit.*, p. 30; cf. also pp. 27-33, and pp. 178-180.

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time, established reason cannot be allowed to be comprehensive, that without a frequent dismissal of reason there is no progress, that without "chaos" there is no knowledge, or happiness or freedom, and that, in general, in our day, a self-assertive and joyful epistemological anarchism is necessary for a fruitful exchange among different ways of constructing a worldview and for the development of our culture as a whole. This position is similar to its alternative, but inclined to be more inclusive in its reticence to be confined for an excessively prolonged period to any one exclusive construction of rationality. In this framework, again, language is not seen as a prison but as a mode of enhancing both the socialization and the individuation of the whole world of values.

The point suggested in both these alternatives is that the question of truth and rationality and the nature of interpretation must be considered again in new ways. If we came to regard our ideological universe self-consciously as our second nature, could we not then perhaps find ourselves poised to present and explore our assumptions and desires and their provisional satisfactions in such a way that human subjectivity, in its objective relations, might appear a little more classically open to the true, and good, and beautiful?

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MASS CULTURE*

by Sandor Radnoti

The legitimation crisis of art, and its struggle for emancipation, are two sides of the same coin. This complex process has given rise to a dichotomy in modern art between high and low, popular and elite, kitsch or mass culture and art *sui generis*. The emancipation of art means a dynamic pluralization of ways of seeing and aesthetic styles: a freedom of options, an increase in the scope of artistic activity, a growing possibility for self-determination in standards and values, and a critical elaboration of traditions. But the existence of a multiplicity of art works that transgress the rules at will is only possible against a homogeneous background. The development of this multiplicity involves the elaboration of unified concepts of art. Two things have thus become combined during the struggle for the emancipation of art. One is the particularization of art works: artistic originality becomes a function of the artist's internal rules rather than external ones. The second is the integration of art works within a general concept of art.

In this fashion, disconnected areas have become subordinated within a unified concept of art and, in this process, traditions have come to be reinterpreted. During the second half of the 18th century, universal conceptions gradually displaced the canons of individual arts, genres and conventions, and the so-called natural systems of beauty universalized from them. Although these new conceptions could identify with selected traditions and claim to provide the sole definition of real art, they also contained an inherent contrary tendency to become independent of particular art works and occasionally even superior to them in order to attain greater generality. Now, the metaphysical mission of art works emancipated from their subordination to metaphysics requires self-determination. This is achieved by each art work, but it is also accomplished by the philosophical contemplation of art works that inevitably confronts them with postulates derived from this contemplation.

German Romanticism was the first artistic movement where the universal concept of art integrated several heterogeneous trends and became an independent entity: this was Friedrich Schlegel's famous *progressive Universalpoesie*.[1] The emancipation of both art and art works can equally be

*Originally written as part of the "Tribute to Lowenthal" in *Telos* 45, this essay was delayed and could not appear with the rest of the contributions. The English translation is by Ferenc Feher and John Fekete.

1. For Novalis poetry was absolute reality, and every individuality partook of truth to the extent it was poetic. Boccaccio was Tieck's model when he integrated his works into his *Phantasus*. But here, art works were extracted as individual fragments from a conversation constructed by its participants out of mutually entertaining art works; meanwhile the framework itself, no longer a story but rather the concept of art turned into a way of life, was called on by virtue of its generality to display a higher order of reality.

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seen in the first philosophies of art. Schelling postulates the freedom of the product of genius; i.e., he starts with the freedom of individual art works. To that end, he has to create a general concept of art that excludes unfree works. He separates aesthetic products from common artistic products as follows: "all aesthetic creation is absolutely free in regard to its principle, in that the artist can be driven to create by a contradiction, indeed, but only by one which lies in the highest regions of his own nature; whereas every other sort of creation is occasioned by a contradiction which lies outside the actual producer, and thus has in every case a goal outside itself. This independence of external goals is the source of that holiness and purity of art, which goes so far that it not only rules out relationships with all mere sensory pleasure, to demand which of art is the true nature of the barbarian; or with the useful, to require which of art is possible only in an age which supposes the highest efforts of the human spirit to consist in economic discoveries, it actually excludes relation with everything pertaining to morality. . . ."[2] This leads necessarily to an independent concept of art based on freedom. A new mythology cannot be invented by any single poet, but only by a new human species for which there can be more than *one single poet.*

If a new integral mythology, the great Romantic aspiration, were to come into existence, autonomous art works and ontological concepts of autonomous art would cease to exist. All universal concepts of art undoutedly contain such an aspect of self-dissolution and the "tyranny of freedom," i.e., the wish to subordinate or annihilate other concepts of art, in spite of the fact that the fundamental experience to be absorbed by them is precisely the freedom and multiplicity of art works. Freedom and multiplicity also mean that our relation to artistic activity is no longer self-evident. The reverse side of emancipation is therefore a legitimation crisis. The general concept of art is called on to solve the crisis, to justify artistic activity. The reality of this concept is one with a practical realization which stands or falls with each art work and each act of reception. But, at the same time, the practical realization in every art work stands or falls with the reality of the concept. This is why the various general concepts of art do have independent substance; this is why what is considered art within a given artistic movement, tradition, or culture has a certain type of priority over the individual work.

This "pre-concept," which I call "will to art," is, of course, far broader than its conceptualized and ideological component, the autonomous and universal concept of art. But it is precisely that component, the conceptual integration of various wills to art, which is most characteristic of modern art. The universal concept, the great ambition of modern art, can never come to a standstill and its priority can never become permanently fixed in any one form. It can never become singular. In terms of cultural history, the universal concept of art can only exist in the plural. Over the last 200 years, fixed legitimacy has been replaced by the incessant re-emergence of legitimation in

2. F.W.J. Schelling, *System of Transcendental Idealism*, trans. Peter Heath (Charlottesville, Va., 1978), p. 227.

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a dynamic process that is more accurately characterized as a mode of existence than a crisis. Individual art works claim their freedom not only against the old non-autonomous status of the arts, but also against all universal concepts of art deduced from philosophy of history or metaphysics as well as against all concepts of art constituted through traditions, movements, or any other art work. This declaration of independence, however, is bound to generate a new concept of art or else lapse into arbitrariness and relativism. The dispute between a concept of art and an art work is not a contradiction between theory and practice, as is often misunderstood, nor a methodological debate between deductive and inductive interpretations, nor a struggle between consciousness and spontaneity, but rather a tension between two fundamental constitutents of an aesthetics in the process of emancipation, and hence inherent in each work of art and in each interpretation.

The universalization of this dynamic is related to the radical transformation of the structure of artistic reception. Oliver Goldsmith remarked: "The patronage of the public had replaced the 'protection of the great,' "[3] the cultural history of the past testifies to an infinitely rich variety in types of reception, each definable in sociologically exact terms; by contrast the concept of "public" is abstract, its consistency heterogeneous and fluid. It is precisely this abstractness of the public audience that emancipates the artist — although not in the heroic (if exaggerated) way recounted in Renaissance anecdotes about artists — a simple result of the unpredictability of the orientation of the public. The world of practical risk is dominated by the ideal of predictability, and this ideal, as mediator between artist and public, in itself demonstrates the disappearance of the immediacy of this relation and its increasingly abstract character.

It is convenient to employ here the analogy of the free wage-laborer selling his labor power on the market. Leo Lowenthal analyzed 18th-century English culture from this aspect, depicting the emergence of the cultural market with the artist as producer and the public as consumer and the development of mediating institutions: publishers, booksellers, lending libraries, and magazines orienting taste. This sociological constellation to a certain extent accounts for the usage and elaboration of varying styles by artists who produced works in the transitional period both under the patronage of the public and the protection of the great.[4]

Both the art and the culturally receptive behavior of the *public* are market mechanisms, their principle of organization is identical with that of the market, and abstract in that the creative and receptive subjects confront each other freely, detached from their traditional contexts, and in concentrated

3. Quoted in Leo Lowenthal, *Literature, Popular Culture and Society* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1961), p. 6.

4. The most obvious example is Hogarth, who, according to Frederick Antal, in keeping with his changing subject matters and types of public, made conscious selections from the artistic arsenals of mannerism, baroque, rococco, and classicism.

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masses. Before capitalism, a public always emerged where market mechanisms developed. The free wage labor of the cultural market opened a different type of freedom for art as well, the freedom of *non*-participation in this production. Apparently, this refusal contributed considerably to the emergence of the universal concept of art by distinguishing the resulting art works, and contrasting them to the products of mass culture: 'productive art.'[5]

The most widespread image of modern art is the artist standing at the crossroads of market temptations and his own inspirations. An artist is one who says "no" to the world for he does not recognize his home in it; an artist is one who *can* say "no" to the world for he creates a new one. The idea that the work of art is a "world" is a modern idea. As to whose world this is — whether it represents the millenarian promise of the realm to be appropriated by everyone with patient cultivation, the earthly paradise of the select and anointed few, or the exclusive territory of the law-giving genius — answers may differ in direction and content. So much, however, is certain: that this world as a rejection of the existing one, in actual fact belongs to only a few. The art work, as a distinct world, is a prefiguration of a new world view, a forecast of an aesthetic state or a report about the existence of an aesthetic caste — in short, the utopian home of man, the human species, definable democratically or aristocratically, and even compressible into the artist's personality.

The universalization of the concept of art and the increasing individualization of art works have constructed this utopian edifice. Similarly, the grand unity of the arts and art works, embracing epochs and peoples, plus the isolated totality of individual works, have to some extent severed the hermeneutical interconnections and drained the inner substance of works of art. It is a modern idea and a modern experience that the art work is form, that its intellectual construction can be derived above all from its aesthetic nature, not from its substantive orientation and commitment, and that it is precisely this kind of freedom that can make the enjoyment of aesthetic reception independent of ideological adaptation and, in this sense, disinterested. Form turns against everyday life, and artistic appearance, as Schiller had hoped would happen, must vanquish reality and itself become

5. On the one hand, the criticism derived from Marx that takes notice of the subjugation of art and culture to the yoke of the market, and on the other, the romantic idea that defines art as resistance to market temptations and to common life, vulgarity, and prosaic bourgeois life in general, are in spite of the elitist inclinations of the latter not so radically opposed as certain scholars contend — for instance, J. Davidov in analyzing the philosophical problem of the relation of art and the elite. The economics and the romantic viewpoints are rather complementary. This is demonstrated not only by the late syntheses of the two traditions in Adorno, Benjamin and Marcuse, but also in Marx's *Theories of Surplus Value:* "Milton, who wrote *Paradise Lost* for five pounds, was a *non-productive* worker. By contrast, the writer who delivers factory hack-work to his publisher is a productive worker. Milton produced *Paradise Lost* for the same reason as the silk worm produces silk. It was an activity wholly natural to him." Even if the conception of artistic activity as natural is ancient, contrasting it to "societal nature" is a thoroughly romantic idea. Art is that which is not produced: this is the thesis of the Marx citation.

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reality.

All autonomous, universal concepts of art entail the claim of an aesthetic universe. An abyss, created by the radical "no" uttered by art, separates art and reality, however the latter is interpreted. Art extracts itself from reality, the most obvious testimony to this being the distinction between art-work and "artifact" (as a "piece of art in reality"). Schelling's theoretical separation of aesthetic product from common artistic product — and, five years earlier, Friedrich Schlegel's distinction between the free rational arts and the mechanical arts serving the needs (in the form of "the useful" and "the pleasant") — draw attention to a sharp contrast between high and low art. Both regard the emergence of this contrast as the characteristic feature of modern art. Schlegel writes: "Entirely indifferent to all form, and thirsty for nothing but artistic *material*, even the more refined audience demands nothing from the artist but *interesting individuality*. If something only has an effect, if the effect is only *strong* and *new*, the audience is just as unconcerned with its manner and context as with the unity of a single effect with a completed whole. Art does its part to satisfy such needs. As in an aesthetic flea market, *Volkspoesie* and *Bontonpoesie* are offered side by side, and even a metaphysician will not seek in vain for something to suit his mood. There are Nordic or Christian legends for lovers of northern mystical horrors, cannibalistic odes for poetry lovers thus inclined, Greek costume for lovers of antiquity, tales of knights for heroic tongues, and yes, even *Nationalpoesie* for the dilettantes of Germanity. But it is in vain that you gather together these great floods of interesting individuality from all quarters. The legendary keg remains eternally empty. With every pleasure the desire becomes only greater, with every enjoyment the demands are only increased, and hope for final satisfaction recedes further and further. The new becomes old, the unique commonplace, and the spur of charm is dulled."[6]

How does this characterization differ from the following one? "But since the spectators are of two kinds — the one free and educated, and the other a vulgar crowd composed of mechanics, laborers and the like — there ought to be contests and exhibitions instituted for the relaxation of the second class also. And the music will correspond to their minds; for as their minds are perverted from the natural state, so there are perverted modes and unnaturally colored melodies. A man receives pleasure from what is natural to him, and therefore professional musicians may be allowed to practice this lower sort of music before an audience of a lower type."[7]

The first difference obviously lies in the calm and composed acknowledgement of the existence of low art. But this is probably the least interesting aspect, for the reader of this passage is still groping in the dark as far as Aristotle's *real* position is concerned: shortly before the lines cited Aristotle sharply rejects any tolerance of this kind. But is the structure of the

6. Friedrich Schlegel (1795), *Ueber das Studium der Griechischen Poesie* (*Seine prosäische Jugendschriften*, Vol. 1) (Vienna, 1906), p. 91.

7. Aristotle, *Politics*, trans. Benjamin Jowett (New York, 1943), VIII. 7. 1342a, pp. 335-336.

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two distinctions similar? The public, a market abstraction in the modern age, is in Aristotle divided from the outset into two distinct social strata, two independent groups of recipients with correspondingly differentiated types of art. In the given case, a perverted variant of vocal-instrumental musical performance corresponds to "the vulgar crowd," although one in which the perversion of the original artistic character and even the natural laws of music can be recognized. In other episodes of cultural history, from which no documents remain, it is even conceivable that there was nothing in common between the "arts" of the two groups and that the educated had no idea that the vulgar pastimes of the uneducated or the alien barbarians could also be art.

At any rate, Aristotle does not have a universal concept of art. He relates various arts — not all of them — to one another, by way of distant analogies. But precisely for that reason he is far from inclined to detach art by reflection — *Herausreflektieren*, as Gadamer would put it — from the context of content and impact. Thus, in the above quotation, music appears in the context of relaxed entertainment, cultivated pastime, "killing time" in a pleasant way, and the education of citizens.[8]

It is only in the modern age that high culture and an industrialized low culture aiming at mass production confront each other as split obverse fragments of a conceptual unity, two independent, self-contained, yet interrelated complexes. As Lowenthal sums up the situation: "The counter-concept to popular culture is art."[9] Both are offspring of the bourgeois epoch: a "yes" and a "no" to the same mechanism with regard to the emergence of mass culture and the culture industry. It is obvious that the ideological midwifery of a universal concept of art assisted in the birth of all modern art works. Whether in tragic, messianic, classicist, or naturalist-educational form, it always embraced the realm of social utopia. Indeed, it would not be desirable to sacrifice the radical critique and the utopian

8. Obviously, it is not possible to sketch in an outline the prehistory of distinctions between "low" and "high" art: cultural history provides an infinity of variations. It is even questionable whether we are entitled at all to speak of a "prehistory," since the work itself presupposes a teleology and a linear evolution of cultural history of which we can find no trace. What can be called "low" and "high" in various periods of medieval culture may refer to a comparative definition of the cultural status of unequal yet independent estates or an undifferentiated will-to-art according to different recipient strata; or to a contrast between some regional culture, eventually left without history and memory, and the then prevalent international Latin culture. But all these concepts are unrelated to the modern concept of low and high art. It is not necessary to take a stand as to whether medieval culture (or one of its periods) is an integral whole in spite of its many particular facets, or whether it is legitimate to speak of two or perhaps more cultures basically independent of each other. It is not necessary to decide whether medieval culture unifies complementary — feudal and urban, clerical and secular — cultures, or whether it is unified in its intention to integrate or marginalize the various types of *ars barbarica*. Whatever the case, in this culture (or cultures) the particular arts, and within them various traditions, genres and artistic techniques, are separate entities and there is *no* common generic concept of art comprising all the arts and only the arts. That *ars* does not mean such a universal concept is well known. In this world there is no art, only arts; nor, therefore, is there any counter-concept to art as art.

9. Lowenthal, *op.cit.*, p. 4.

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standard inherent in this construction either to a historical materialist or a hermeneutical reconstruction.

Yet I would like to reverse the direction of interpretation and return to a previously mentioned idea. According to this view, the interpretation of mass production and of the culture industry in the economic terms of the market fails to account for the homogenization of the concept of mass culture. This massive, closed unity that re-emerges in every redefinition cannot be explained by *production* for the market, because this constitutes a total system and therefore the market mechanism transformed into an absolute, rational, social explanatory principle. The assumption of the unity of mass culture is just as much an ideological construction as the absolute generalization of the market, and it is needed precisely for the purposes of another ideological construction: the self-definition of the concept of art. It presents a dystopia, the negative counter image of a positive utopia. Lowenthal's dictum can be reversed: the counter-concept to art is mass culture.

In other words, it is not only art that explains mass culture by denying it, but vice versa. According to the previously cited passage from Schlegel, the vast substantial richness of needs and the unlimited possibilities of interest, entertainment and enjoyment follow the same pattern. If we recall that the culture industry did not yet function at the end of the 18th century in Germany when the contrast between low and high culture was elaborated for the first time, then it can be legitimately maintained that the concept of high art is not merely a theoretical reflex of a culture in the process of capitalization, not simply a response to the commodification of art and its rationalization in terms of profits — even though it is this, too — but rather the conceptual integration of those mechanisms as a precondition for the unification of the "free rational arts."

It is worth considering the full logic of the dichotomy between high and low art, starting with the hypothesis that it was high art itself that fetishized mass culture. How and why could this happen? My interpretation will conclude in the genesis of dynamic society and even the market mechanism will play a role in it, but in a different way. I would like to return to the argument that modern art and modern art works started to wage a war of emancipation because the self-evident character of artistic activity had disappeared. The atmosphere of freedom in this situation was somewhat rarefied. The function of the art work in life became much more indeterminate, or else variously determinable and hence the artist's role in life became more abstract. For me, it is a series of shots from Tarkovsky's film, *Rublyov*, that most remarkably expresses the paradox of the disappearance of the self-evident character of art: the paradox of its simultaneous freedom and abstractness. At the nadir of his deep crisis of separation from sacred traditions, Rublyov, the icon painter, throws his rag, still moist with dye, against the white wall, a place destined for holy paintings in the prescribed order of canonic forms. In front of our eyes, the formless trace of the rag turns, in unity of emptiness and

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freedom, into an artistic form.

But abstractness is not displaced in the openness of the art work, the autonomy of its contents, or the pluralistic modalities for perceiving and experiencing it; abstractness is also incorporated within the universal concept of art. Indeed, this concept is always abstract to a certain degree. Culture abstracts itself from material culture and, stepping outside its original local context, represents the universe of those intellectual values that can be selected relatively freely and consciously: it represents the possibility of detachment from direct life relations and their reality. Culture, art, and the art work become values for their own sake; culture itself, in opposition to all previous establishments and all religious cultures, becomes the leading cultural power.

In this situation, art's frame of reference becomes questionable. It cannot take its new reference points from a closed context of life and traditional interrelationships, but has to adopt to the new dynamics breaking through these interrelationships. Art becomes its own frame of reference by defining its own concept and distinguishing itself conceptually. New and old, high and low comprise the two conceptual pairings within which this conceptual distinction and definition comes into existence. The old will be identical with the ancient, the archaic (folklore), the grand style that unifies everything, the naive and the natural. The new will be identical with the non-actual, with exploration, dedicated quest, thirst. The new will discover, or fail to discover, the unity of the old with the eternal home of art and, on that basis, either set up the old as the measure for itself (in a form ranging from simple imitation right up to establishing the most general metaphysical measures) or else satisfy low needs.

This simple schema of the emergence of the universal concept of art, the elaboration of reference points, standards, and counter-concept out of art's own materials, the definition of modern art in the mirror of the ancient, and of art in the mirror of pseudo-art, becomes, of course, incomparably more complex as soon as it becomes dynamic, and consecutive universal concepts of art come to be based on the negation and rediscovery of one another. But there is an incipient contradiction in the interrelation of the two pairs of concepts, and this tension contributes to the evolution of the dynamic. In the distinction between genuine and false, high and low, the leading values must be originality, individuality, novelty. Yet, on the other hand, in the antithesis between new and old, the old must, in some fashion, be paradigmatic. This latter constellation is also new, since the paradigm is not provided directly but by a selected tradition. The *edle Einfalt, stille Grosse*, or noble simplicity, of Greek art, popular art, the homogeneous culture of pre-Raphaelite art in Christian Europe, national archaic art, the primitives — are all rediscovered.

Such rediscoveries are at the same time constructions. Passing on a selected tradition is always a more problematic and violent process than the direct and self-evident inheritance of traditions. The old may become obsolete and antiquated in this process, noble simplicity an empty and dictatorial canon of classicist academicism, popular forms and homogeneous culture, may turn

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into an irrationalist myth, Schillerian naiveté, perhaps into narrow-mindedness, and the cult of naturalness into blind faith in a scientifically manufacturable naturalism. A relay race of universal artistic doctrines develops in which the very gesture of radically confronting the old becomes an artistic value for its own sake and the very criterion of art.

The strategy of the *avant garde* (or modernism) thus takes shape well before the word itself is coined and the related self-consciousness of the movement emerges. Part and parcel of this strategy is to identify any doctrine regarded as antiquated with low, *kitsch*, mass products. Most of the new concepts of art push their direct ancestors into the counter-concept, mass culture, the more radically the more they promote their own novelty.[10] Meanwhile, the culture industry is established for the mass production of the latest artistic innovations. Similarly, fashion, a more embracing and more fundamental category than the industrial production of culture, also becomes the *colporteur* of the latest original artistic innovations. In this sense, the ever-new universal concepts of art find ready-made materials through which they can manifest themselves as long as they universalize them into low or mass culture.

This alternation of obsolescence and innovation, and the parallel submergence of formerly high art in the sphere of low art (even as formerly low art may become the foundation, as Tinyanov showed in *The Literary Fact*, of a new high art) has constituted the general, and accelerating, development of the last 150 years. We can recognize in this trend an orientation to the market and its need for the systematic introduction of new products. Novelty has become so much the predominant value in art that it has subordinated and to an extent even excluded other values such as beauty, harmony, proportion, completeness and objective form. The orientation to the market, however, cannot be reduced to the fact that culture has become a sector of the economy. It is not adequate to suggest that the industrial organization which caters to mass consumption provide stimuli that partly coerce artists to escape from mass culture into the ever-new, and partly induce them to experiment at their own risk with novelties that will later be absorbed by mass culture. I do not question the existence or possibility of such manipulation, but I consider that any reduction to this particular tendency as the determining factor is one-sided.

One may say that the two great forms of articulation of modern art are the artistic movement and the isolated art work. One can note as a matter of record that all criticism of the *avant garde* takes as its standard the great isolated art works. The critic constructs his own antithesis between the new and the old, and confronts the new with a catalogue of old masterpieces perceived as isolated, i.e., separated from their own contexts of tradition.

10. Whether those have a narrow or a wide audience does not matter: Bayreuth's elite did not turn in Nietzsche's vocabulary into the Bayreuth mob because the quality and quantity of that public had changed in proportion with the changing judgment, but simply because Nietzsche's concept of art had changed.

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Only those really isolated art works of the present age are then found to meet this standard inasmuch as they "swim against the current." On this logic, modernist *avant garde*, too, is included in the category of the mainstream "current," the pseudo-aesthetic sphere of low culture consisting of works that, unconsciously or against their intentions, serve the world rather than run counter to it.

Without dealing with this critique of ideology, I want to direct attention to the common structure it shares with its adversary. The market, not in its reductively economic, but in its overall cultural sense, has an impact on even the most isolated art works, in so far as the work relies on an unknown and heterogeneous public reception and distinguishes itself by a global opposition to any other actual or potential procedure for achieving artistic effect. This reliance on an unknown public becomes the existential basis of the universal concept of art. Universality, and artistic expansion beyond the borderlines of a closed community and a homogeneous scope of ideas, are inseparable from the assumption of a common authority for the validation of values and a common standard of value applicable to the whole universe that is complementary to the material market, and where the difference between cheap and valuable art becomes interpretable. Individual works and movements enter this market mechanism as "property." Originality, an independent conception of form, a characteristic selection of materials, a new concept of art — these are all either the private property of individual artists or the collective group property of trends and movements. (The great anonymity of authors, as Simone Weil correctly understood, is only conceivable in a world order in which art has no value for its own sake, that is, no universal concept in the sense under discussion.) Exchange value in this context is identical with the new value of general recognition, although this act of exchange, in contrast to material exchange, has no temporal limitation; it can be even merely imaginary, and there is no quantitative criterion for universality.

It is from this constellation that the fundamental value of novelty and the universalization of low culture into a counter-concept can be understood. All art works count on having recipients; this expectation is a structural element of the very work itself. To repeat: the art of the bourgeois world epoch calculates on an abstract (open) and free reception that is capable in principle of integrating recipients from totally alien cultural-intellectual backgrounds. Since it wants to sustain itself, this abstract calculation can be defined only negatively: by its *non*-everyday character, *non*-this-worldly character, grotesque features, peculiarity, and dissonance with reception.

Each modern art work generates a tension between taste and the idea of form which can be properly measured by the historical separation between artistic taste and the perception of quality. Because it is *not* only *one* community of taste that a new art work confronts but in principle all prior communities of taste, every novelty becomes valued for its own sake in an abstract sense, and each particular community of taste becomes the adversary

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of the autonomous art work and of the universal concept of art. Every particular community of taste is hostile to an art work with a claim to universality — the community of taste from which the work arises, because it resists expansion; alien communities of taste, because their traditions resist intrusion. Thus, a universalizing claim becomes evident not so much in the creation of a dissonance with *one* particular community of taste (except to the extent that that one represents all others symbolically) as in unifying all particular communities of taste within the general category of low culture. Of course, this process is advanced by the weakening of particular communities of taste and the emergence of a world community of tastelessness. But the adversary of the universalizing tendency is not only "bad" taste. Its very mode of existence is tension with all existing conventions of taste. The other side of this same process is that the art work becomes insular, a universe, a monad.

If we were to draw the radical, but justified, conclusion that the universalization of the concept of art comes into conflict with taste itself, this would coincide with the experience that the high art of our age is not a culture-creating art. The slow process of cultural evolution is ill served by the furor over the ever-new, the insular individuality of the art work, and the corresponding devaluation of purely value-preserving or sustaining art and art enjoyment (as expressed in the current atmosphere surrounding such categories as epigone or dilettante). More precisely, if it is true that generating dissonance with common taste is the very mode of existence of modern art; if Walter Benjamin's discovery is valid that Baudelaire expected to be received by an inattentive, distracted public longing for entertainment, and for that reason employed calculated shock effects; if it is true that it was in "*cette longue querelle de la tradition et de l'invention*" (Apollinaire) that the greatest modern art works were born; and if it is true that Mayakovsky's famous dictum ("we are going to slap the face of common taste"), is only a reckless and extremely provocative formulation of the typical behavior of the modern artist, then the high art of our age is paradoxically indeed culture-creating art in that it creates its opposite, mass culture. It generates a culture of life in order to articulate itself in tension with it.

The situation of the modern audience for high art is symptomatic in this respect: the public committed to high art has no way to define itself other than negatively and exclusively, by its rejection of mass culture. As a result, it is surrounded by a not unfounded suspicion of snobbery. And high art, on the one hand, by creating dissonance with its own community of taste, as with every other, and the culture industry, on the other hand, by establishing the mechanisms for the effective power of high art, jointly guarantee that the audience for high culture, as a community of taste, itself becomes an integral constituent of low, or rather, mass culture.

Up to this point, I have been talking about emancipated high art and its self-interpretation as rooted in its form and mode of existence. This self-interpretation, the universal concept of art, has a double structure. On the one hand, it is a *tendency* that acquires formative existence with the modern

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will to art, that is, in the life of art and in the art work. On the other hand, it is also a *consequence*, as an ideological utopia that remains a concept whose material actualization would lead to self-contradiction. So far, I have been speaking of reception as an integral part of form and artistic intention. Reception, however, as it occurs in actual recipients, raises new problems. The discussion began with the self-interpretation of art, that it belongs to the sphere of high culture. At this point, however, the question arises whether there exist universal criteria which, apart from such self-interpretation, would divide the realm of art in two.

In his essay "The Structure of Bad Taste," Eco takes notice of a great change in art and postulates a dialectical relation between *avant garde* and *kitsch*. "The arousal of effects produces *kitsch* in a cultural context where art is not regarded as an inherent technology in a series of diverse operations, but as a form of consciousness that is generated by the creation of form for its own sake and that makes disinterested contemplation possible."[11] Bad taste and *kitsch* are characterized by forced prefabricated effects and the endeavor to reproduce the typical effects of art: "when common and popular culture no longer sell art works but their effects, artists react by moving toward the opposite pole and concerning themselves neither with arousing effects nor with the work itself but with process leading up to the work."[12] *Kitsch*, then, has a concept of art and provides the appearance of art. "The anthropological situation of mass culture is circumscribed by a continuous dialectic between innovating suggestions and justificatory adaptations; the former are constantly betrayed by the latter because the majority of a public which enjoys the latter in fact believes that it is engaged in the enjoyment of the former."[13]

Clearly, the conception that I have set out is identical with Eco's. However, his attention is focused on the birth of *avant garde* strategy as a reaction to *kitsch* gaining ground, that is, under the forcible impact of the "abuse of art" by the market economy. That it is not only the relation between *avant garde* and *kitsch* that is dialectical but also their relative priority is not Eco's concern. The result is a somewhat pragmatic delimitation of the problem. Eco strictly separates off within mass culture the communication of messages and everything that does not possess a concept of art or claim to be called art; he only criticizes what remains.

We may call this latter *kitsch*, and identify it with bad taste, as Eco does, but then the extremely important question of the relation between bad taste and tastelessness still remains open.

On one hand, the very conceptual framework of Eco's skeptical-realistic position excludes all those programs and ideas that would aim to transform the tastelessness of a mass culture overwhelmingly indifferent to taste and to

11. Umberto Eco, "La Struttura del Cattivo Gusto" in *Apocalittici e Integrati* (Milan, 1965), p. 72.
12. *Ibid.*, pp. 74-75.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 78.

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elaborate cultures in which the objects, "messages," and pastimes in everyday life would be characterized by good taste and purposefully created forms. On the other hand, Eco uncritically maintains a separation between life and art. This is natural inasmuch as he is one of the scholars who in the past decade have most influentially summed up the experiences of two centuries of art's struggle for emancipation. His famous phrase, the "open work of art" (to be compared with Goethe's *oft gerundet, nie geschlossen*) refers precisely to the capability of the modern art work to cut the anchors of unambiguity that bind it to any particular frame of reference or community of recipients. In modern reception the same thing happens to ancient art works as well, since in their case the very fact of reception already points to openness, or more precisely, in a formulation somewhat different from Eco's, to "being opened." On the question of whether there exists a universal criterion for assessing low and high art, it is precisely the modern reception of ancient art works that may provide relevant experiences.

It is commonly known that certain classic works become part of mass culture and sink to the level of *kitsch*. For instance, Adorno mentions this in his study "On the Fetish Character in Music and the Regression of Listening" in connection with certain Beethoven symphonies. Eco's explanation is that in such cases it is openness that ceases to exist: the varieties of reception fail to enrich each other and one particular mode of reception becomes schematic and prevalent to the point where the work attains a redundant unambiguity. Through this process, the "stylistic potentialities" of the work are exhausted and *kitsch* is what appears thus exhausted.

This is a convincing explanation. The question, however, is whether we could not also imagine a reverse process in which "closed" *kitsch* is opened and received as a work of art (for instance, Ernst Bloch "opened" Karl May's work, probed beyond its crust and explored it; nevertheless, he defended "happy endings," *colportage* literature). But Eco himself is compelled to answer this question in the negative since he considers openness *not* to be a subject-object relation but an objective structure, a potentiality provided in solid objectivity. He writes: *Kitsch*, which by definition refers to "being exhausted," "is based on a relation between surprise and the unexpected which ought to arouse in the recipient an interest in the particular structure of the poetic message. In fact, this communicative relation now faces a crisis. But this crisis does not predicate anything about the structure of the message which, from an objective point of view, if all references to a historically situated receptor are eliminated, has to remain unaltered. The message must still contain the communicative potentialities brought into it by the author when he had in mind an ideal addressee."[14]

This, however, is a double impossibility. Historically situated reception cannot be eliminated either from our own reception or from the artist's "ideal addressee." Should we wish to "reopen" Leonardo's work, as against the

14. *Ibid.*, p. 102.

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Kitsch-Gioconda," we cannot blot out from the history of reception, which is the life of the art works, the episode of its transformation into *kitsch*. (Indeed, the term "episode" is already evaluative, polemic-laden and expressive of a chosen perspective.) There is undoubtedly, in a sense different from Eco's conception, an atemporal reception, a resurrection of the art work, side by side with its temporal reception, its continuous life; indeed, the latter must ultimately lead to the former. But this atemporality does not mean an objectively or metaphysically "fixable" *a priori*, since it is not the abstract fixation of the actual moment of genesis of the art work that is at issue but the elimination of the elapsed time between the creation of the work and the life of the recipient. This supra-historical approach cannot eliminate the concrete, unrepeatable historical time in which this act of elimination itself takes place. The very word resurrection alludes to this, and what has been resurrected flows back historically into the life of the art work. The two types of reception can briefly be characterized in the following way: the first is the permanent presence of a given work in a culture, the second is the individual (in other words: always reinterpreted and differently interpreted) repetition of its genesis.

Open and Closed: these concepts cannot be universally evaluative. The work remains open as long as it is not "being opened" by someone. The emancipation of art leads with logical necessity to the recognition that there is no artistic value in itself. As we have already seen, the value of an art work in its specific capacity as a work of art is a value for its own sake that is *posited*, and it presupposes positing art's universal value for its own sake. (For the universal concept of art posits value: it contrasts a non-value, in the form of mass culture, to itself.) As acts of individual freedom, both fall short with respect to their universality, on account of the equally free acts of individual receptions and of positing other universal values. If the history of its reception is the life of an art work, then reception cannot be determined to be true or false by revealing some objective value structure abstracted from reception. Indeed, there can never be such a determination at all, only a value debate — about what is low and what is high art. The whole process of the emancipation of art is nothing but this value debate.

What stage has this debate reached? The most remarkable factor is the increasing openness of works of art. This is not the place to discuss what may be the limits of the openness, the disintegration of reference, or the reduction of redundancy in music, theater, film, poetry or the fine arts. What seems to be beyond doubt, however, is that the process itself is none other than the strategic integration of the universal freedom of reception into the art work itself or, put differently, the acknowledgement of the impossibility of such calculated integration. The artist accepts the hypothesis that even his own relation to his work can only be one reception among many; he declines a large part of his distinguished role of guiding interpretation in the creative process. It is doubtful that these new trends, sometimes called the neo-*avant garde* (or post-modernism), will bring about a grand style. At any rate, they

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proclaim a new attitude that criticizes the universality intrinsic to all search for a grand style and challenge as inexact or false the very designation of post-modernism or neo-*avant garde*. The argument is that the new development means precisely that the tendentially terroristic energy of the modernist *avant garde* is renounced, playfully or ascetically.

Such renunciation of energy mutilates the universality of the concept of art at two decisive points. First, this view implies a reduction of interest in whether a given work is a work of art. The game, the experiment, the document and the action come to rival, as values for their sakes, the concept of the art work. Second, in connection with the first, there is a reduction of interest in the universality of the valuation of these products for their own sake, that is, in the principle of their universal receptivity. This does not contradict what has been said about the calculated integration of the universal freedom of reception; it simply means acknowledging something that also belongs to freedom of reception, namely, that many do not wish to receive a given thing at all. The end result of such a recognition may be that artistic activity and life activity become nearly identical. This would mean that only one who lived it could become its recipient, the references of a way of life would come to replace the references of artistic form, and the calculated strategic integration of the unknown recipient would be abandoned. Such sectarian introversion is already evident in a number of modern artistic currents. Under these conditions, the autonomy of art and life, art and the universal concept of art, disappear. As a consequence, the myth of the universalization of low culture disintegrates as well.

Would this then be the resolution of the dichotomy of low *culture* and high *art*? Would autonomous and universal concepts of art be annihilated, and art fragmented into the infinitely variegated an once again self-evident artistic activities of small groups and subcultures that either ignored or tolerated one another? And, provided there were no hierarchy in the eventual relations among small groups, could a creative and productive aesthetic universe of freedom arise in the place of universal art — where everybody could be an artist and the aesthetic sphere would not be isolated or in transcendental opposition to life but an immanent ethos? This utopia, based on existing tendencies, along with its inherent values and standards, is important — but not as an alternative to universal art. To renounce the latter would represent a serious loss in value. We do not need the annihilation of art, but a reform (or reform movement) that would eliminate the antithetical complementarity of art and mass culture and regard the aesthetic ethos of small groups as a culturally innovative dilettantism that must remain equally subject to criticism as to the integration of its universalizable artistic values.[15]

15. Such criticism, in the interests of reforming the universal concept of art, must paradoxically always consider whether the art-creating small groups have truly renounced the universal concept of art or in fact are really *neo-avant-gardes* with a false consciousness, with the result that their inner openness and outward closedness (a closedness not in the aristocratic but in the defensive-tolerant meaning of the word) are mere ideological appearances. I am thinking of two

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In summary, and in anticipation of what follows, my own view is that the pacification of the universal concept of art, the conclusion of the *war* for the emancipation of art, is now necessary. The last chapter of Georg Lukacs' late *Aesthetics* bears the title: "The War for the Emancipation of Art." I no longer share my teacher's philosophy of art, but I must reach back to his categories. First of all, as is by now obvious, I regard the existence of this *war* of emancipation as an indubitable fact, and since art cannot have a value for its own sake in a religious universe, I also accept that art's war of emancipation, its self-interpretive, universalizing dynamic, is primarily directed against religious universalism, at least at the point of art's genesis. But I cannot share Lukacs' view that aesthetic this-worldliness and religious transcendence are so contradictory in substance that, if we attend to this conflict, some of the great artistic periods will appear to be mere "counter-movements" or "preliminary stages" within the mainstream of aesthetics, and some essential kernel of "this-worldliness" can be extracted from the transcendent religious shell of Dante or Giotto's work. On the other hand, I

critical possibilities. In the first case, these groups have *not* resigned their claim to elaborating a universal concept of art, and what had seemed to be such a resignation was in fact nothing but the continuation of the old dynamic, a new recycling of discontinuity, provocatively elevating something from low culture to the rank of high culture. If criticism demonstrates that such is the case, it is then clear that the high-low dichotomy has once again been reproduced, although this in itself has no direct implications for the value of art in question.

In the second case, the concept of art is renounced but, in spite of an ascetic and resigned sectarian spirit, the militant universalizing endeavors are *not*. This attitude also has deep roots. Let me mention Bertolt Brecht, whose name alone remained on the blackboard when — in Jean-Luc Godard's *La Chinoise* -- the small anarchist group wiped the names of the giants of high culture off it. Brecht found the contradiction between life and illusionist art intolerable, and therefore he gave up the concept of autonomous art in favor of the utility and applicability of the art work in life. In this way he was able to draw closer to mass culture; or, more precisely, for Brecht it was not the primitive fable, the *colportage* novel, the "whodunnit," the exoticisms of harbors, colonies and vagabonds, the cabaret, jazz music, obscene erotica, or jocular and didactic effects of the "sub-art" of carnivals and marketplaces that meant low culture, but rather an oblivious absorption in high culture without any life consequences. A search for direct life effects instead of artistic ones (which of course resulted with Brecht in immortal artistic effects) was inextricably bound up with a militant doctrine that possessed "firm knowledge" of the determinate direction of the development of human society, and wanted partly to share information and partly to shepherd people in this direction.

Also in this second case, some such doctrinal background inevitably exists, and it is the doctrine that the small artistic groups desire to distribute and universalize even as they renounce the concept of art. They may totally reject high art, together with the values of the past, as the spoils of the conqueror. (Nietzsche's cole remark that slavery is essential to culture was later converted into *Kulturkritik* by Walter Benjamin.) Herbert Marcuse, in *An Essay on Liberation* (Boston, 1969), pp. 25-26, writes: "The aesthetic as the possible form of a free society appears at that stage of development...where the higher culture in which the aesthetic values (and the aesthetic truth) had been monopolized and segregated from the reality collapses and dissolves in desublimated, 'lower' and destructive forms, where the hatred of the young bursts into laughter and song, mixing the barricade and the dance floor, love play and heroism." This liberation, however, is subversion. Marcuse sees clearly what follows and even draws the unacceptable conclusion: human emancipation has to be realized against the will and the interests of the great majority of human beings. In the cultural revolution of small groups, that is, in militancy that transgresses to boundaries of their own circles, free fantasy turns into its opposite — a fantasy practicing coercion — and no trace remains of the openness and freedom of reception. The reform that could put an end to the dichotomy of low culture and high art will not be born of "mixing the barricade and the dance floor."

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consider it one of the most profound characteristics and most magnificent achievements of emancipatory art that we can become the recipients of Dante or Giotto's work as disbelievers, without a community of ideas or religious consciousness.

Further, Lukacs' diagnosis of modern art is that, in the modernist *avant garde*, an aesthetic attitude is subordinated to religious consciousness (religious in its structure, its doctrine) and religious need. If we shift the emphasis of this line of thought away from the *avant garde*, and say "substituted" instead of "subordinated," then the assessment in a sense characterizes the whole emancipation struggle of art. Goethe and the age of romanticism, Lukacs says at one point, "was the prelude to the transformation of an object-oriented religious universality into a religious need confined to the subject."[16] Universal and exclusivistic concepts of art do satisfy religious needs and provide substitutes for religion, but this is not only characteristic of certain problematical trends within art, as Lukacs contends, but serves as the necessary energy source in the struggle for emancipated autonomy.[17]

It is to the distinctness, the utopianism of autonomous art that the religious need attaches itself, or rather, this utopianism partly accounts for the quasi-religious structure of universal concepts of art. Kant's term for the ability to appropriate sensuous and aesthetic phenomena directly was intuitive reason in contrast to discursive reason, "moves from the synthetic universal, or intuition of a whole as a whole, to the particular — that is to say, from the whole to the parts. To render possible a definite form of the whole a contingency in the synthesis of the parts is not implied by such an understanding or its representation of the whole."[18] This can refer equally to the intuition of the whole of the divine teleological consciousness that has arranged nature and the teleological consciousness of the artistic genius that has created a masterpiece. Obviously the direct, aesthetic "appropriability" of the art work, and hence also its dysfunction — i.e., the suspension, pluralization, and opening up of its everyday functions and claims — is a precondition for the autonomy and universality of the concept of art.

16. Georg Lukacs, *Die Eigenart des Aesthetischen* (Neuwied and Berlin, 1963), vol. II, p. 872.

17. The canonization of various arts was followed and replaced by an autonomous aesthetic creation of artistic norms, and the normative-teleological structure of the aesthetic entity thus emancipated reconstructs to a certain degree the primary teleological structure that in past religious cultures has comprised the world itself. This is why aesthetics plays such a key role in classic and romantic German philosophy, as a mediator (Kant, Fichte), the hierarchical summit and general *organon* of the system (Schelling), the guarantee of human individuality and universality (Schlegel) or the hidden structuring principle of the system, as in Hegel's philosophy of history where universal history is constructed teleologically by self-conscious speculative dialectical reason, and where the art work itself, as a created totality, a teleologically constructed *world* that is simultaneously organic, "natural," and a goal for its own sake, becomes either the model or the residue of the creation of the world, but in any case an "other world" distinct from the given world.

18. Immanuel Kant, *The Critique of Judgment,* Trans. James C. Meredity (Oxford, 1952), part II, par. 77, p. 63.

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In the course of its conceptual emancipation, art assumed quasi-religious features and reproduced categories of grace, mystery, divine promise, salvation, prophetic expectations, revelation, and the absolute. Arnold Schoenberg writes in one of his letters to Oskar Kokoschka in 1946 about one of the latter's admirers: "unfortunately, like my own followers who admire Hindemith, Stravinski and Bartok as much or even more, he too has too many gods, Klee, Kandinsky, etc. Yet 'thou shalt have one God'..." It was with a purpose that I selected this bizarre document. It clearly shows the limits of the religious need attached to art — limits that emerge simultaneously with the need itself. These are the other artists' freedom to universalize their own concept of art, the recipients' freedom to be familiar with and to prefer 'other gods' and finally the situational specificity of universalization today, as over the last 200 years, that, to maintain the claim of universality, the artist has to take the work to a spiritual market and reckon with the varying contextualization of recipient strangers. Artistic pluralism, having provoked conceptual unification, also prevents it from being completed; in other words, it stands in the way of a final triumph of any one of the rival concepts of art.

The first condition for concluding the *war* of emancipation of art and attaining this emancipation has been actively at work in the concept of art since the beginnings of this war. I am referring to the universality that evolves from individuality and which has to be sustained as universal on the basis of its individuality. If this evolution is an act of emancipation, then against the militancy, even tyranny, of freedom must stand the self-communication of freedom, Marcuse's free fantasy without its self-revocation: *solidarity* in freedom. This individual universality, in solidarity, by its nature (not its content), with other individual "samples" of universality and with acts of individual reception, does not represent an annihilation of aesthetic universality but surely its diminution. Against the idea of the infinity of universality and the eternal validity and immortality of the art work, it emphasizes finiteness — in the sense that in each epoch, each human act of reception, it is not some eternal life of the work that carries on but a new life that begins. It is a finiteness and recommencing anew that ensure the co-constitutive role of the recipient.

This, however, presupposes a further scaling down, in the form of renouncing the idea of perfection as a component of universality. I do not mean here canonic perfection, which was renounced long ago, but the conviction (expressed in many ways) that the value of the art work excludes the contingent character of its parts. But can contingency be excluded from the notion of the whole that is constituted by intuitive reason? Reception may well represent a process in the self-creation of the work where contingency can come as an actual end; in a hierarchical aesthetics, this could be called an artistic peak experience. But, because of its rarity, this cannot exhaust the entire sphere of aesthetics, nor, because of its finiteness, can it be solidified

19. Arnold Schoenberg, *Briefe* (Mainz, 1958), p. 254.

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independently of actually given recipients, into a domain of eternal, objective value. There is, nonetheless, some extent of solidification, but it does not take place in actual artistic reception where the art work is given life, again and again, but rather where the work lives its life virtually as a reservoir of the former: in culture.

This brings us to the second condition for a successful conclusion to art's war of emancipation. The autonomous and universal concept of art essentially takes into consideration only the arts at the top of the hierarchy. Its expectation is that an art work adequate to the concept of art should evoke a peak experience, have a cathartic impact, and alter the recipient's life. Forming hierarchies is legitimate, as is the utopian hope expressed by Rilke's famous line. But the segregation of the peak of the hierarchy from the rest sets up a confrontation between high culture, the corpus of great works, and low culture, the homogenized corpus of other artistic activities and products of the most diverse character. The reform of the universal concept of art should have as a goal not to ostracize from the concept of art the non-universal arts (e.g., art that is not valued for its own sake, art that is regional or even narrower in scope, non-objectified artistic activity, which is decorative, entertaining, didactic or utilitarian in nature, the art of conservative epigones aimed at maintaining and preserving values, or dilettantism).

These varied modes of practicing the will to art should not be excluded from the concept of art, either on grounds that they are devoid of individuality (e.g., clichés, series, non-individuated traditional forms, variations on a theme, or imitations), or on grounds that they are devoid of universality (e.g., in having reference to only *one* tradition, community, group, or particular entity). The concept of art should not exclude the constructs of any autonomous idea or form for lacking in taste, nor that wide area of culture that guides us upward to the individual-universal art work. Again, this calls for solidarity — solidarity with the human need for art that lurks behind all these products and human activities.

Such a reconstruction of culture, a broadening of the concept of art, and a scaling down of universality cannot, however, mean either the restoration of the organic character of culture, i.e., a preferential bias for art that preserves continuity with the traditions from which it arises, or the fabrication of a radically new culture that begins an entirely new discontinuous tradition. This argument, naturally, is not meant as a prohibition; it simply expresses the theoretical conviction that both are impossible undertakings and that all attempts to be consistent in their implementation would lead to self-contradiction. The break between high and low culture cannot be welded, but this fragmentation can be further fragmented to the point where the universality of low culture is defetishized and the universality of art is likewise modified.

After all, the conclusion to the *war* of emancipation cannot mean the revocation of its achievements. It cannot abolish what Gadamer has called the alienation of aesthetic consciousness: "No artist of the religiously vital cultures of the past ever produced his work of art with any other intention

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than that his creation should be received in terms of what it says and presents and that it should have its place in the world where men live together. The consciousness of art — the aesthetic consciousness — is always secondary to the immediate truth-claim that proceeds from the work of art itself. To this extent, when we judge a work of art on the basis of its aesthetic quality, something that much more intimately familiar to us is alienated. This alienation into aesthetic judgment always takes place when we have withdrawn ourselves and are no longer open to the immediate claim of that which grasps us. Thus one point of departure for my reflections in *Truth and Method* was that the aesthetic sovereignty that claims its rights in the experience of art represents an alienation when compared to the authentic experience that confronts us in the form of art itself."[20]

I have tried to consider this problem and to conceive how a new *reduction* of the distance between life and art can be rendered conceptually comprehensible. The *revocation* of alienation of this type is not only impossible in dynamic societies, but is not even desirable. It is not desirable because the exclusive character of a demand for recognition as belonging to the world would annihilate the criticism that the art work exercises over the world. This criticism would be annihilated since the reason for its *capacity to be* (and in each new act of reception, *to become*) lasting and universal is precisely that what is lasting and universal in it, its aesthetic character, is secondary to its immediate truth claim, its need to have direct hold of reality; in consequence, it can absorb and incorporate ever new realities. In a sense, the art work's definition of value as it constantly arises in the practice of reception resides in a structural feature of the art work: that it does not put forward the immediate claims of what it is seized of, i.e., that its "experiential reality" (*Erlebniswirklichkeit*) is open or can be "opened." This is the source of the utopian character of art, as much in the most significant art works of the pluralistic, dynamic world as, retrospectively, in the great art works of the past.

But criticism and a utopian impulse are also recognizable in both non-universal and low art. They are inherent in the very will to art, in the need for art. Examples can be observed in every type of artistic creativity, in the form of the creation of something *new*, and even in regressive consumption, in the form of dream and reckless fantasy, escapism, festivity and celebration, moved sensibility, appearance of beauty, longing for happy endings, serenity, distributive justice, purification, play and strength. Of course, it cannot escape attention that the culture industry is established for the mechanical mass production of all this and ever undergoes numerous types of self-criticism; and that these wishes and will become needs precisely in their mechanized, fabricated forms. The mythologies of mass culture, analyzed by Lowenthal with regard to biographies, illustrated by Roland Barthes with examples from the most divergent fields, indeed do take shape in this context.

20. Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, trans. David E. Linge (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1976), p. 405.

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It is worth noting that Barthes uses mythologies in the plural, immediately indicating a divisive contradiction with the single powerful mythology of ancient cultures. The new methodologies are weak because they do not give form to life, but instead serve as compensations. The contrast between a high culture that opposes the world and a low culture that stands in the midst of it proves to be unfounded: even the mass production of low culture intends to produce other *worlds*. Either it emphasizes that its constructs are illusions in order to contrast them to life as its complementary or compensatory elements, or it blends its illusions into life, encourages experience of them, and reproduces them as real-life illusions. The real contradiction is between the universal, open ideas of form in high culture and the universal (i.e., integrated, fetishized mythologized and *as such* needed) closed ideologies of low culture. But the source of the weakness of low culture is precisely here in the constant, pressing contradiction between closedness and universality and between a way of life and a substitute for life. This weakness makes it possible, not to destroy low culture, but to individualize it, to fragment its universality. Mass culture is a closed ideology that may be "opened" in every individual receptive context and which can be detached from its given context.

THEORY and SOCIETY

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ON THE HISTORY OF THE WORKERS' COUNCILS*

by Andrei Silard

Workers' self-management remains a central concept in any project of social renewal. All alternatives to existing paths of socio-economic development inevitably lead to the concept of self-management and self-government. This is because every genuine social catharsis in history has always had traces of self-government, even if they usually faded away as new values blend in the complex network of existing relations and the new institutions become new social orders opposing the very sources that engendered them. Organs of collective decision-making by and for all those involved in production, self-managing units are considered necessary to redistribute power in a society striving for meaningful social relations. Eventually, in conjunction with new social institutions, workers' councils would create a political climate rendering coercion and repression obsolete.

An understanding of the present prospects for self-management in countries having a free market, central planning, or mixed economies requires an examination of what has led to the existing socio-economic predicament. The collapse of the short-lived council experiences after World War I in Italy, Germany and elsewhere seems to justify the correctness of the pessimistic evaluation according to which the workers' councils are branded "the tragic orphans of working-class history."[1] Moreover, it is believed that self-managing bodies, "born during brief moments of epochal fracture and revolutionary fervor"[2] have always been conceived only as a means to power, not as an organic basis of power itself. Finally, there is the belief that workers' councils in factories interfere with managerial authority. Thus, from the viewpoint of decision-making and rationalization of production in industry, they are seen as undesirable — irrespective of political regimes.[3]

Given these evaluations, it is hardly surprising that people interested primarily in their personal welfare see workers' self-management if not with indifference, at least with skepticism. In the harsh realities of contemporary history, which praises only the victors' deeds, those accustomed to accepting the world as it is are encouraged to regard the idea of people freely associated

*This article is a revised version of my paper "On Workers' Participation in Management," presented at the 15th International Congress on Historical Sciences held in August 1980 in Bucharest, Romania, and of "Beginning of Workers' Self-Management," presented January 20, 1981, at the Nicolae Iorga Institute of History in Bucharest.

1. Franklin Adler, "Factory Councils, Gramsci and the Industrialists," *Telos* 31 (Spring 1977), p. 67.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 67-68.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 67-68, 84-87; Enzo Rutigliano, "The Ideology of Labor and Capitalist Rationality in Gramsci," *Telos* 31 (Spring 1977), pp. 91-99. Cf. also Karl Korsch, *Consigli di Fabbrica e Socializzazione* (Bari, 1970), pp. 34-35, 58-60.

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in productive organizations as a romantic vision of a distant future.[4] Thus, it is not surprising that workers' self-management is often discussed by uninvolved scholars who often cannot disguise their distrust of workers' ability to establish spontaneously autonomous productive agencies. So, heated discussions over workers' councils *for* the workers often take place within closed academic circles, while those directly concerned remain uninvolved. This raises fundamental questions about the historical conditions that give rise to demands for workers' councils from "below."

Two instances of actual self-management occurred over a 50-year period when the major theories about it came into being: the Paris Commune and the post-World War II Italian factory councils. The importance of the Commune is emphasized in Marx's *Class Struggles in France*, where he unveils his views concerning the organization of the productive sector in a socialist society. Praising the Commune decree stipulating that "all factories and workshops abandoned or closed by their owners were to be turned over to *associations of workers* that were to resume production,"[5] Marx developed his idea of *cooperative factories run by producers themselves who regulate production according to a plan elaborated from below.* Both Marx and Lenin considered the Commune as the first seed of socialist democracy with direct access to power by everyone engaged in production.[6]

The tragic fate of the Commune added fuel to the controversy regarding the relation between spontaneity and organization on the one hand, and the concrete forms of the "socialization of the means of production," on the other. Chronologically, spontaneism understood as *direct* struggle between workers and owners paved the way for the emergence of theories of class consciousness. By the time of the Commune, however, spontaneism was to succumb to its inherent weaknesses: its narrow base and its partial aims that did not basically change overall working-class conditions. Thus, in the last three decades of the 19th century, there was a gradual shift from spontaneism to organizational forms such as trade unions. Once institutionalized, however, these organs of economic solidarity could not interfere with decisions regarding production and often could not even act locally without approval from the national headquarters.

Intellectuals and other social strata subsequently played a major role in the formation of labor parties. Social-democratic parties came into being as

4. On this, see my "Hope in History," in *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire*, XIX: 2-3 (1980), p. 472, pp. 483-487, 505ff.

5. Lenin, *On the Socialist State* (Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, 1978), pp. 32-33. Italics added. See also Karl Marx, "The Class Struggles in France," in Saul K. Padover, ed., *Karl Marx on Revolution* (New York, 1971).

6. It was the economic self-management of producers and the direct, economic and political democracy in the French experience of 1871 that inspired Lenin to consider the Commune experience as "a beginning, on the basis of large-scale production" in the process of a "gradual *withering away of all bureaucracy.*" Cf. Lenin, *op.cit.*, p. 60. Italics added. On Lenin's writings see also: Antonio Carlo, "Lenin on the Party," *Telos* 17 (Fall 1973), pp. 29-33; and my "Aspects of the Science-Democracy Relation within the Framework of the Socialist Revolution and Some Considerations about Scientific Society under Contemporary Conditions," in *Revolutia Socialista si Revolutia Stiintifica-tehnica* (Bucharest, 1975), pp. 290ff.

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vehicles of struggle against the law-and-order of an entire system, which generated the economic and socio-political contradictions that antagonized not only workers, but other social strata as well. At the time, the parties concentrated on solving two main problems still topical today: 1. How can workers and citizens in a capitalist society develop personalities that may become a molecular part of a counter-hegemonical force, if the very work process deprives them of the ability to go beyond the system's established moral values? 2. How can all the phases of a revolutionary process be connected to guarantee a smooth transition to a *new rationality*, with no fall in industrial output, while constructing new institutions to protect "the instinctive feeling of independence"[7] of every citizen, by limiting abuses of power?

With the rise of monopoly capital at the turn of the century, accompanied by the emergence of various forms of industrial legalism, social-democracy changed its approach. In the wake of important parliamentary and local victories before World War I, Italian Socialists and German Social-Democrats engaged in broad battles where the factory was only one focus. There were various projects for self-management in industry: direct management of all factories by workers' councils; creation of management boards composed of workers and technicians as well as of state representatives; nationalization of the main branches of industry with workers elected on corresponding managing boards, etc.[8] As for immediate goals, socialist programs sought gradual improvement of the working class' living conditions within a constantly expanding productive sector, while laying the foundations for a gradual participation in management.[9]

7. Walter Adamson, "Beyond 'Reform or Revolution,' " in *Theory and Society* 6 (November 1978), p. 437. Quotation is from Gramsci. See also: Norberto Bobbio, "Why Democracy?" in *Telos* 36 (Summer 1978), pp. 50ff.

8. There were also demands for "syndicalization of the state," whereby all functionaries were to be elected by workers or unions representing workers. If applied, union control of the state would have inevitably been confronted with the bureaucratization of the syndicates as their functions expanded. See: Max Adler, *Démocratie et conseils ouvriers* (Paris, 1967); Rosa Luxemburg, *Gesammelte Werke*, Bd. 1 (1893-1905), (Berlin, 1974); and Korsch, *op.cit.*

9. One of the basic ideas regarding the socialization of the means of production was further developed by Romanian Socialists. They envisioned socialization in the form of elected managing boards composed of production workers, representatives of cooperative factories and consumers. Production plans were to be developed from below and correlated with all units of the same branch so as to spare workers the painful consequences of competition. Meant to develop feelings of solidarity instead of egoistic claims, these councils were actually *socially* oriented: "demand" was taken into account by the presence of consumers in managing boards. Since, unlike land, factories could not be divided into equal shares to provide workers with economic independence, the councils were to become safe-guarding agencies, offering economic shelter for life to everyone involved in production. These ideas (outlined for the first time in the 1886 Program of Romanian Socialists) were extensively elaborated afterward, especially in the writings of the leading Romanian theorist, Constantin Dobrogeanu-Gherea. Although contemporary societies have developed several peculiar features, which the old socialists could hardly envision, their message for posterity remains viable because of their ability to develop a socially oriented organizational framework that took into account not only the producers' interests, but those of all citizens as well. The associative process at the point of production envisioned by socialists at the time aimed at transforming industrial management into a self-adapting embodiment of emancipated collective will. The emphasis on the simultaneous satisfaction of the needs of producers as well as

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The other forms of transition from spontaneity to organization, with class consciousness being the pivotal issue, occurred within backward conditions of no civil liberties, almost "industrial serfdom" in the factories, and hence, with no room for an oppressed minority class to express legally its assigned historical mission: to be the representative of all of society and to liberate it from the exploitation of capital. Since the everyday experience of those oppressed could not generate a change in the outlooks inherent in their social condition, the historical mission assigned by theory to the working class was taken over by a core of keepers of historical consciousness. This gave rise to the dichotomy between the assigned historical mission and the need to introduce consciousness from "outside." The emergence of a core of professionals dedicated to the infusion of class consciousness had built-in provisions for the rejection of any spontaneity in setting up and preserving popular organs of the type foreshadowed by the Paris Commune: the lack of "adequate" consciousness has always been an excuse for lack of democracy.

The impossibility of legalistic forms of struggle led to the conclusion that the downfall of the predominant system of oppression could only take place by transforming the enlightened elite into a military-type political organization dedicated to the violent conquest of power and the subsequent establishment of a regime consistent with this group's view of reality. This transformation required organization, iron discipline and monopoly of "objective" truth. The shadow of étatization looms behind a political formula that leaves no room for spontaneity, but only for unconditional orders from above for norms having the force of law and aiming at undercutting any challenge to the ruling group which thus appears as the sole representative of an entire collectivity.[10]

The success of European Leftist parties triggered off a response from the traditional ruling class aimed at defusing, through social reforms, economic incentives, skillful cooptation of labor leaders, those very explosive issues which had precipitated the formation of labor parties. This tendency became predominant on the eve of World War I, when "national consensus and harmony" became a favorite theme of official propaganda. At that time, however, many of these parties were already faction-ridden. Yet, the leadership sought to maintain hegemony over the rank and file to avoid *spontaneous* radical actions that would have endangered their personal positions and deep institutional entrenchment. Although triggered by tactical questions, the splits that occurred in the ranks of many Left parties after World War I had deeper roots: the interpretation of class consciousness with all its consequences for the future organization of production and social life.

In the post-World War I European political landscape, the factory council

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of citizens, on solidarity instead of petty-bourgeois self-interest, is a direct expression of the role attributed to the emerging historical consciousness in the creation of new human relations *along* with economic development.

10. Cf. Alvin Gouldner, "Prologue to a Theory of Revolutionary Intellectuals," *Telos* 26 (Winter 1975-76); Waldemar Gurian, "The Totalitarian State," *The Review of Politics*, 40:4 (October 1978), pp. 514-517; and my "Hope in History," *op.cit.*, pp. 485-488, 504-510.

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movement in 1919-20 Italy was one of the major spontaneous workers' actions seeking autonomy at the point of production, and which took place independently and in spite of Socialist Party leadership. This workers' movement was peacefully initiated to provide an alternative to the existing power relations in factories, at least in the most important industrial Italian town — Turin.[11] What is important about this episode is its distinctively Italian character stemming from the militancy of the *Ordine Nuovo* intellectuals. They sought the establishment of autonomous workers' agencies, independently of all mediation by the bourgeois state, party and labor unions. Yet, there was hardly an identity between the theory developed by Leftist intellectuals (especially Gramsci), stressing the political and cultural pedagogical goals of the councils, and the councils' actual practice. The theory and the praxis had actually two different sources, which were never unified: a demand by brilliant intellectuals for self-management under capitalism as a condition for the transition to socialist humanism and an economic movement strongly influenced by self-interest. The councils' movement was an attempt to regain at least some of the working-class autonomy *vis-à-vis* capital's plans to integrate the proletariat in the project of reorganizing production on scientific grounds by rationalizing the division of labor.[12] Conceived as political instruments capable of supplanting both party and union (products of the prevailing system), the councils had in fact no inner resources and even less the political strength to turn their experience into a qualitative leap. Just as the Commune remained confined to one single city, the spontaneous councils' movement, disavowed by the Socialist Party and lacking political strength to build nationwide unity, was condemned to remain a distinctively Turinese phenomenon.

The Italian workers' councils could not suddenly change the workers'

11. The critical history of this movement is well known. The essence, limits and legacies of the Italian factory councils are examined in detail in my "Factory Councils in Italy: An Insight 60 Years Later," *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire*, XIX:4 (1980), pp. 669-700, which contains an almost complete bibliography up to the Summer 1979.

12. Cf. Rosella Prezzo, "Sul Rapporto tra Economia e Politica in Gramsci," *Aut Aut*, 159-160 (1977), pp. 90-107; Sergio Bologna, "Class Composition and the Theory of the Party at the Origins of the Workers-Council Movement," *Telos* 13 (Fall 1972), pp. 4-27; Adler, *op.cit.*, p. 82; Rutigliano, *op.cit.*, p. 97. Increased mechanization symbolized by the assembly line enabled capital to rationalize the division of labor to the smallest detail. The time-motion studies accompanying mechanization and other technological innovations had broken every craft down into a series of elementary jobs that could be done by unskilled workers. By forcing every worker to accept limited tasks and by flattening the difference between skilled and unskilled workers, the performed rationalization, derived from the development of productive forces, had homogenized the subjective component of the labor process. By measuring the productivity of all anonymous workers engaged in mass production, industrialists had actually undercut the ability of highly skilled workers to effect the labor process, since every worker, regardless of his skills, was fixed in advance to certain tasks down to their smallest detail. Intensified work rhythms, the discipline and the strictest control entailed by the assembly line as well as all the other activities it implied, had undermined the feeling of security, especially among highly skilled workers, who lost in the process of rationalization their autonomy, which previously had been guaranteed by the demand for their accumulated skills and knowledge. Consequently, the close cooperation between science and industry had actually produced a rationality whereby those in command could unilaterally determine all working conditions.

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traditional psychology shaped by a certain rationality and configuration of the division of labor. Without an adequate overall socio-political climate, the councils could not overcome overnight, simply by existing, purely economistic claims. Although highly skilled workers and engineers were in the forefront of the movement, general aims remained always at the mercy of the rapidly changeable will of directionless spontaneity. The Turin councils did block the elasticity of the organic composition of capital in factories through workers' self-management. But they seldom went beyond economistic frontiers. The movement appears now as a "response to the tightening of labor discipline" in a transient process of Italian capitalism, "a last resort after the workers have exhausted their [traditional] institutional appeals."[13]

While 1919-20 Italian society was boiling with seemingly pro-Left social unrest, the councils could hardly become the core of what Gramsci later called permanent "national-popular will." Since both theory and practice ignored the crucial role of parties at the moment when the masses became politically active, the movement, having no relations with other mass organizations and no force of its own to oppose to the state apparatus, could not displace the prevailing social order. The *issues* raised by the councils were too explosive to be readily integrated. The interests of the *borghesia del lavoro* (one of the most liberal and open-minded bourgeoisie in Europe) and those of the councils could not co-exist. Thus, the councils' limitations were not inherent only in the consciousness that shaped them, nor was their fate only the fault of the Socialist Party leadership. It was rather the country's entire objective situation that set the councils' limits — including the political skill of the enlightened representative of the *borghesia del lavoro* in defusing a potentially explosive social situation. Those circumstances had shown that no system would tolerate openly challenging bodies seeking to disintegrate the foundations of the established order and, at the same time, that no ruling class would passively preside over its own demise. It is not a coincidence that precisely after the Socialist Party's "revolution at the polls" at the end of 1919 that the wind of counter-revolution began to blow in Italy, stirred up by an ad hoc coalition of all those scared by socialism, fed up with *scioperomania* (strike mania) and with the country's authority crisis. Coupled with the Socialist Party's political inertia, the worsening economic conditions rendered the task that much easier. By then, however, the battle was directed not only against the councils, but against the whole Left.

The way the issues were ultimately settled transformed attempts at self-management from a vehicle of possible social change into catalysts of reaction that prevented the realization of at least some of the changes the councils had been seeking. Doubtless, in "normal" political circumstances the

13. Sharon Zukin, "The Paris Conference on Self-Management," *Telos* 34 (Winter 1977-78), p. 154. Such outbursts have always accompanied certain steps in the rationalization of labor through technological innovation. The final acquiescence by workers to new levers of control over them led inevitably to mass apathy and to pronounced feelings of alienation at the point of production. This type of conformity amplified the pessimistic traits of workers' psychology, fed also by lack of opportunity.

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elite-designed agreement that ended the 1920 revolutionary assaults (including the councils' activity) would have meant a fresh start in the reconsolidation of the war-battered economy within the framework of a new phase of institutionalized class relations (as happened in other European countries). The government-engineered agreement between union leaders and enlightened industrialists, stipulating a vaguely outlined involvement of syndicates in enterprise management and state economic planning, could have served as a basis for implementing some of the councils' movement demands. However, in 1920 Italy, the last move by post-World War I *transformismo* was doomed from the start never to become a law-enforcing liberal capitalism.

The failure of the post-World War I revolutionary efforts in several European countries had a tremendous effect not only on immediate world history (primarily through the rise of totalitarianism), but also on the development of the workers' movement as a whole and on demands for self-management. It had become clear that parties claiming to represent the proletariat were not sufficiently mature to take over in their respective states and that the bourgeoisie had not yet exhausted its options. The ensuing reorganization of capital on a world scale was aimed against expressions of "historical consciousness" and tried to create favorable conditions for the "traditional" ruling groups in order to perpetuate their domination *with the help* of the workers themselves. This gradual large-scale reorganization of the economy spanning over two decades allowed the more economically advanced countries to dictate their will in the world economy, thus compelling all other less developed countries to follow and to cooperate in its worldwide reinvigoration.[14]

The post-World War I process of international readjustment of economic and socio-political relations either by totalitarian means or through representative democracy with growing state intervention altered all previous schemes based on workers' autonomy. The emergence of highly centralized mass organizations, the party-state symbiosis in several countries based on the myth of identity of interests of all social groups, undercut any opportunity to express grievances or to challenge the system's officially established values. Industry became a battlefield governed by military rules; praise for exceptional results went hand in hand with harsh punishment for even the slightest expression of spontaneity, which was immediately equated with disobedience and disloyalty. No political or even economic initiative could have emerged from the bearers of "class consciousness": in these countries workers' hard-won *right* to organize soon became an obligation to join official labor unions, which had "degenerated from organizations for proletarian class struggle to elements in the apparatus of State repression against the workers."[15] Forced to become integrated within totally controlled societies,

14. Cf. V.I. Lenin, *Opere Complete*, Vol. 41 (Bucharest, 1966), p. 167; Rutigliano, *op.cit.*, p. 99.

15. Korsch, quoted in Rutigliano, *op.cit.*, p. 98. See also Carlo, *op.cit.*, pp. 29-39; and the special issue of *Recherches*, "Le Soldat du Travail: Guerre, Fascisme et Taylorisme," 32-33 (September 1978).

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with work organization and the social environment precluding any deviation from officially established norms, workers could not seek goals independently of those of the state.

The same division of labor and rationalization of production implemented in totalitarian societies were also adopted by most economically advanced countries, with institutions based on representative democracy. Both systems have pursued essentially the same goal, albeit through different means: absorption or integration of workers into the predominant social structures as a prerequisite for increasing productivity and national wealth. The two ways of developing a programmed economy, with different degrees of state intervention, far from being limited to a technical organization and rationalization of labor, involved a clear *political* project: to submit every citizen's lifestyle to a new work ethic and new norms of behavior. The transition from economic individualism and anarchic competition to a rationalized market with stimulated demand was not just a way to organize a more efficient economy based on the assembly line and technological innovations, but also a way to subordinate living labor to dead labor through productivism. As a result of Taylorism and Fordism, the depersonalization of labor created the "collective worker" with a new discipline and new values internalized at the point of production. Thus, the working class unconsciously became a major component in the development of productive forces. Self-interest and individualism still constituted the main integrative dimension of a rationalized economy, which in turn determined social relations expanding from the factories into society. "Hegemony is born in the factory [through high wages, various social benefits, shared ideological and political propaganda] and requires for its exertion but a minimum quantity of professional go-betweens in politics and ideology."[16]

Thus, new post-World War I realities and the failure of the 1917-20 mass upheavals — including the seizure of power in Bavaria and Hungary by newly formed communist parties — sealed the fate of workers' councils.[17]

16. Antonio Gramsci, *Quaderni del Carcere*, Vol. II (Turin, 1975), p. 2145. The process of economic integration intensified after World War II confirmed the forecast of *The Communist Manifesto* that the bourgeoisie cannot survive without constantly revolutionizing the productive forces and thereby the relations of production and, consequently, *all* social relations. Cf. Marx and Engels, *Opere*, Vol. 4 (Bucharest, 1963), p. 469.

17. Business became aware of its problems after the mass upheavals of 1917-1920. Based on a lucid analysis of the causes of costly social warfare, this eventually led to a number of gradual steps, especially after the Great Depression, defusing explosive issues through both economic channels and state intervention. The "state seized direction of capital-labor conflict at an historically opportune moment," especially in the United States; "thus, it was the political institution, acting as the capitalist consciousness of a capitalist society. . . which produced a truly new synthesis between politics and economics." John DeBrizzi, "The Concept of American Exceptionalism as Ideology," *Berkeley Journal of Sociology* 23 (1978-79), pp. 92, 94. Every economically advanced representative democracy sooner or later went through Americanism and Fordism by means of their own mini "New Deals" and the Keynesian revolution. Various forms of state monitoring and intervention in economic affairs, collective bargaining and the inclusion of workers' demands in economic planning, the democratization of consumption and its correlation with wage levels demand stimulation and the creation of (often artificial) acquisitive values, led to a calmer political life. The linkage of individuals' welfare to the stability and well-being of the whole (be it the productive unit or the state), the hegemony institutionalized at the point of

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Recriminations between Socialist and Communist parties as well as the radical Left's subservience to Moscow disoreinted workers and leftists. These legacies reverberated for decades to come, paralyzing the Left's ability to resist during decisive moments when its very existence was at stake.

Since the end of World War II, only in Yugoslavia has there been the implementation of the first seeds of an economy based on self-management both as an alternative path of development and a device to defend the country's independence in an era of brutal external pressures.[18] Elsewhere the

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production and the "culture industry" fueling the "political industry" and confining activism to traditional local levels or to elections, changed mass psychology, values and attitudes during the interwar period. These developments allowed the preservation of private strongholds in the direction of capital and contributed to the dumping of Leftist parties in many economically advanced countries. See Leslie Hannah, "Labour and Management in the Direction of Industry in 20th-Century Britain," *Rapports, XVe Congrès International des Sciences Historiques, II* (Bucharest, 1980), pp. 726-732; Ronald Schatz, "Labour and Management in the 20th-Century United States: General Electric and Westinghouse, 1911-1960," in *ibid.*, pp. 743-750; Aimée Moutet, "Labour Conflict with Employers' Rationalization in France," *ibid.*, pp. 774-789; Patrick Fridenson, "France, Etats-Unis. Genèse de l'Usine Nouvelle," *Recherches*, 32-33 (September 1978), pp. 375-388; Maurizio Vaudagna, "L'Americanisme et le Management Scientifique dans l'Italie des années 1920," *ibid.*, pp. 389-432; Ioan Saizu, "La Roumanie dans le contexte des preoccupations d'entre les deux Guèrres de Rationalization de la Production et du Travail," *Revue Roumaine d'Histoire*, XVIII:3 (1979), pp. 575-594.

18. This major experiment in self-management, begun under unfavorable conditions in a small developing country that ultimately chose non-alignment in a world of political blocs, had to overcome a string of difficulties while attempting to make economic democracy a main component of social development. The three decades of the Yugoslav experience in self-management show that the gradual loosening of state controls over industry simultaneously with the establishment of workers' direction in factories is only a *beginning* in a long quest for solutions to constantly arising internal contradictions (within the workers' councils, between the latter and the managing board, between self-managing units, etc.) and to problems raised by dealing with countries having other types of socio-economic structures. The system of economic decentralization which made profit the main criterion determining the success of any enterprise, whose managing board, partly elected by workers' councils, was accountable to all producers for every aspect of production (ranging from the plan and the balance sheet to the distribution of accumulated funds which the successive laws left at the enterprise's disposal) had undoubtedly played a positive role in the improvement of the quality of work and hence of commodities, along with the transformation of "one-will management" into a consensus obtained in the process of collective decision-making. The functioning of self-managing units showed that the workers' councils were not conflict-free bodies. Composed of individuals and groups with different cultural backgrounds and interests, these organs could not be free of conflicts of interests, of weaknesses and limitations stemming from latent contradictions. Hence, the demand for the readjustment of the prerogatives of councils and managing boards to the requirements of evolving realities, and the strains due to the democratic decision-making process within "endless" worker self-managment meetings which "sap the energies of workers and managers alike." Cf. D.A. Andelmann, "Yugoslavia: The Delicate Balance," *Foreign Affairs* (Spring 1980), p. 838. The other side of the coin of self-managing units competing for market and resources consists in the reproduction of factory localism and individualism: petty-bourgeois self-interest, pragmatic attitudes toward everything, disregard of others' needs. To problems and imbalances induced by market forces, one must add the evolving concept of social justice, the pervasiveness of acquisitive values, and needs which can only be partially satisfied. What counts most within the problems of self-management is the will of all those concerned to stick to this path, their confidence in their abilities to overcome all the issues raised by particular circumstances of development by adapting the council-type structures to the requirements of evolving reality. Cf. Edvard Kardelj, *Self-management and Social Property* (Bucharest, 1977); René Lovrencic, "An Outline of Historical Development of Workers' Management in Yugoslavia 1950-1965," *Rapports, XVe Congrès International des Sciences Historiques*, vol. II, *op.cit.*, pp. 760-773.

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experience of workers' councils has exhibited the following paradox: when there is a rule by consensus based on both economic integration of citizens and on an active "civil" society, there is no "natural" need for councils. When the equilibrium is broken, the spontaneous establishment of workers' councils is a sign of either local grievances or of endemic social crisis. One of the tragedies of the self-institution of workers' councils is that the renewal from "below" is the consequence of a social explosion, i.e., a way of expressing accumulated dissatisfactions not only with the deterioration of economic working conditions, but also with the values of a social order identified by producers to be at the root of the crisis. If organic, this means a lack of confidence in the future and in the ability of those in power to tackle the real issues, decay of traditional values, pessimism as a result of a lack of viable solutions in sight, and, finally, the disintegration of the main pillars of a central authority as a result of the cutting off of authorized channels of communication from bottom to top.

The few short-lived attempts to establish workers' councils from "below" have shown that spontaneous outbursts against local or generalized injustices cannot transform these bodies into viable nuclei of a national regenerative process. In fact, isolated cases of occupation of factories and resumption of production under workers' control in economically advanced countries were often simple substitutes for strikes or desperate actions triggered by massive lockouts. Other types of unrest, often wrongly equated with "workers' control in factories," were actually symptoms of crises with deep roots resulting from the total instrumental rationalization of all aspects of social life. Yet, even the embryonic workers' councils spontaneously born during times of turmoil had, as a rule, weak coordination with no prospect of becoming part of a future political landscape. These failures were due primarily to the fact that all contemporary structures have built-in provisions to preclude, either through integration or by political means, the emergence of a counter-hegemonic force with a viable alternative to the prevailing order. Workers' movements leaning toward self-management as one of the directions of social renewal can bring about socio-economic changes only by transcending spontaneity, i.e., by becoming an organized force. Such movements can survive only within a network of social relations and become a force catalyzing change only by becoming inserted within a rapidly evolving political landscape, i.e., by acquiring strength and homogeneous vision through links with other radical social groups.

The few attempts to establish workers' councils in enterprises can thus be seen as signs of the systems' dysfunction and the result of the separation of producers from owners. As projects, workers' councils become an attractive alternative where the state monopolizes the means of production, making decisions on purely political criteria. Social explosions and the various projects of self-management testify to the fact that neither the market economy nor the wholly nationalized economy can provide the security required for the fulfillment of one's personality. Just as private ownership with

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its cash nexus does not provide the shelter and security everyone longs for, so the total abolition of private property (what Marx called "the negative abolition of private property" or "primitive communism") does not bring about social and political emancipation and does not solve accumulated social contradictions. While the sanctification of private ownership is a corrupting privilege, a way to selfishly enjoy freedom against any kind of human solidarity, the "negative abolition of private property" entails a forced "regression to the unnatural simplicity of the poor and undemanding man, who has not only failed to go beyond private property, but has in fact not even reached it."[19] The administrative steering that follows the latter move does not preclude the re-emergence of the iron laws of oligarchies and can sometimes limit a country's general development.

Projects for self-management and the short-lived realization of workers' control in factories can also be seen as reactions to a certain organization of work. In fact, *regardless of the prevailing type of ownership of the means of production*, present-day organization of production is based on the strictest hierarchical division of labor and differentiation of income. Interwoven in an increasingly sophisticated network, modern enterprises require quick and competent decisions. Carrying out these decisions of "one-will" management requires a hierarchical structure. Thus, economic democracy clashes with "the ever greater technical nature of decisions."[20] In other words, the level of development determines the configuration of specializations and the variety of skills required while the needs for coordination and control allow the creation of a certain hierarchy of competence and wages, i.e., a privileged system of retribution. Often excluded from making real contributions to the running of their enterprise and condemned to carrying out unquestioningly the decisions made by a technocratic-bureaucratic leadership, workers are allowed to be interested in the fate of their workplace only through self-interest. Decisions made from "above" are profit-oriented and often set worker against worker, thus conflicting with human values. Economic inequality, the indifference generated by boring jobs, and aristocratic attitudes toward manual labor persuade workers that nothing related to the enterprise is their concern, except promotions and better wages. Unable to express their true grievances as to the organization of work at the point of production, workers seek escape in their leisure time. Unable to influence the decision-making process directly, often workers alter the

19. Marx, quoted in Ferenc Feher and Agnes Heller, "Forms of Equality," *Telos* 32 (Summer 1977), p. 9. In a society where equalization is reached on the basis of scarcity and through quantified needs established by teleological redistributors, "general envy [constitutes] itself as a power in disguise in which greed re-establishes itself, only in another way" (especially when acquisitive models are at hand).

20. Bobbio, *op.cit.*, p. 53. Self-management advocates often underestimate difficulties in implementing direct democracy. Besides the development of the productive forces which leaves an increasing number of people incompetent and favors the growth of technocracy, other enemies of direct democracy are: the enterprises' large size, the petty-bourgeois traditions and people's reluctance to assume additional burdens at the workplace in "normal times," and the growing bureaucratization of civil society, which helps the state crush every emerging counter-culture.

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efficiency of decisions and rationalizations through silent disobedience.

This hierarchy is encouraged not only by the growing need for knowledge and skills (often wrongly equated with competence), but also by the unconscious internalization of values generated by systems that distribute privileges in exchange for adherence to certain "rules of the game." With no viable political alternatives, fulfillment is sought not so much in work, but in a better life outside the labor process. Work is then equated with the opportunities it offers for upward mobility which, within the prevailing system of values, entails escape from painful and degrading physical labor by seeking higher income, privileges and the social status provided by certain positions on the ladder of officially established meritocracy. This tendency leads people to submit unconditionally to the requirements of promotion.[21] Since upward mobility is a goal in itself, success is attained not only by competence, but also by the ability to compete to survive, and loyalty toward those in higher places. As privileges are related to the place occupied in such a structure and to the distance to the means of production, the uncontrolled bureaucracy ends up pursuing its own objectives of growth. These heteronomous institutions are "natural" consequences of a certain historical development and not merely its accidents. They have succeeded in gradually displacing all other types of structural relations in both economics and politics, regardless of the type of ownership of the means of production.

Thus, even the best intentions "from above" and the noblest ideas from "below" have had little impact on economic democracy: the social strata performing the function of owners or redistributors is immune from attempts to erode its basis. The privileges it guarantees explain why even in societies where a social catharsis could have meant a fresh start in bridging or avoiding flagrant social inequalities, building new human relations disappeared behind a smokescreen of suprahistorical goals. The accelerated primitive accumulation of capital, performed either by all-powerful market forces or political leaders, gave rise to privileged strata whose jobs went hand in hand with their expansion. Seeking to reduce waste and to represent general social interest, these strata unconditionally subordinate everything to the iron laws of coordination and control from "above." They inevitably altered human relations by cultivating parasitism, promoting greed and self-interest in those seeking a place within an organization that spread like cancer an indifference toward people's lives, grievances and aspirations.

It is no wonder then that the productive sector (especially industry) still escapes popular control: the technocracy, i.e., competent decision-making, and democracy, "understood as the best method for making collective

21. The belief that one's advance (often wrongly equated with fulfillment) is through a position is stronger than ties of solidarity. Thus, workers often quarrel over small differences between their wages and envy one another for being too "successful." As a rule, however, most of them think that a directing job must always entail much more reward and privilege than their highest incomes. See, e.g., Cornelius Castoriadis, "The Hierarchy of Salaries and Incomes," in *Catalyst* 13 (Spring 1979), pp. 95-104.

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decisions,"[22] have opposite requirements. Yet technocratic-bureaucratic decision-making combined with the strictest division of labor exacts a price: the uninteresting nature of work results in absenteeism and insubordination, which translate into enormous losses in output and profits. Problems generated by the organization of work cannot be dealt with only by means of wage increases or simply by coercion. Hence, the need for partial modifications in working conditions (autonomy of production teams, abandonment of assembly line whenever possible, "job enrichment," etc.) and the development of "industrial psychology" to deal with workers' mental patterns and emotional behavior. The need to maximize output and reduce waste also led to various forms of "co-determination," i.e., the participation of workers' representatives in various phases of the decision-making process in exchange for the workers' commitment to improve overall economic efficiency or to implement plans.[23] These efforts, however, do not go beyond certain limits. They preclude the alteration of the directing power of single or collective owner-redistributor and hence do not call into question the decision-making power of a hierarchy of command, entailing in its turn a hierarchy of incomes.

Proposals for workers' councils have often ignored historical conditions — especially other social forces existing beyond workers and owners. Reducing history to dichotomous patterns based on the ownership of the means of production, these proposals have often ignored changes in the composition and psychology of the working class, the effective rationalization of civil society by the dominant culture, and the complex problems of decentralization of modern economies. The struggle triggered off under the banner of the class consciousness of manual workers (a slogan propagated by and under intellectuals' leadership) coincided in advanced countries with a certain stage of development when the economy gained momentum due to the increased weight of applied science. This ultimately led not only to the creation of sophisticated machinery that took much of the work load off workers, but also raised to a predominant role a growing stratum of "brain" workers. The drastically enhanced productivity allowed an increase in workers' living standards (instead of constant pauperization as forecast by Marx). Every enterprise today increasingly employs the intellectual apparatus

22. Norberto Bobbio, "Are There Alternatives to Representative Democracy?" *Telos* 35 (Spring 1978), p. 21.

23. Cf. Castoriadis, *op.cit*; Werner Conze, "Zur Geschichte der Mitbestimmung in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland," *Rapports,* Vol. II, *op.cit.*, pp. 713-725; Carlo Ghisalberti, "Travail et Entreprise dans les Codifications Italiennes Contemporaines," *ibid.*, pp. 733-742; S.S. Khromov and V.Z. Drobizhev, "USSR Working Class and the Production Management Problem," *ibid.*, pp. 751-759; Jardar Seim, "Labour and Management in the Direction of Industry in the 20th Century: Forms of Cooperation," *ibid.*, pp. 790-806; Hans de Geer, "The Impact of Ideas of Efficiency, Technological Development and Bureaucracy in Postwar Sweden," paper presented at the XVth ICHS, Bucharest, 1980; William W. Winpisinger, "A Labor Perspective on Science and Technology," *Science and Technology Policy: Perspectives for the 1980s,* Herbert I. Fusfeld, ed., published in the *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences,* Vol. 334 (1979), pp. 264-275; N.N. Constantinescu, *The Problem of Contradiction in Socialist Economy* (in Romanian, Bucharest, 1976).

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and the accumulated cultural wealth of society.[24]

Under such conditions, a transition toward self-administration by producers-owners generates a conflict between the increasingly social character of production and the implications of voting within a self-managing unit restricted to producers in the factory where the end product is made. Consequently, if an enterprise belongs solely to its employees, the broader working community contributing to the realization of the end product has no rights in the aforementioned unit and no input in decision-making. Such questions might not be crucial in the case of small-sized factories, but in medium-sized and especially large industries they are crucial. Since modern enterprises must be run on the basis of a genuine scientific management system, the workers' councils would be inevitably made up predominantly of professional and managerial cadres. If so, what would be the meaning of producers' ownership at the present stage of socio-economic development other than a vote that the workers "can exercise in decisions about solutions of problems which they [often] do not understand" or judge solely through their self-interest? In such a case, "a worker in a capitalist economy who buys stocks or shares in a business has more right of ownership than a worker in a factory which is supposed to belong to the workers."[25]

Many other questions regarding the future practice of workers' councils in a self-managing system remain unanswered.[26] Higher stages of development

24. Cf. Mihai Draganescu, *The Second Industrial Revolution* (in Romanian, Bucharest, 1980); Andrei Silard, "Specific Contemporary Mutations in the Concept of Work," *Viitorul Social*, III:2 (1974), pp. 416-422. The second industrial revolution fully revealed the built-in contradiction between the need for creative thinking and administrative regulations reducing the scope for creativeness. These restrictions inevitably reduce a country's potential wealth. One of the contradictions that fuels the idea of workers' councils is the conflict between the need for "brain" workers and genuine scientific management in order to pursue an intensive path of socio-economic development and the glorification of manual labor as the source of class consciousness, which leads to underestimating the intellectuals' importance. It is no secret that when the intellectual capacity is limited by normative acts and leveling of needs, economic results are bound to be effected.

25. Eugen Loebl, *Conversations with the Bewildered* (Cambridge, Mass., 1972), pp. 104-105.

26. Some of them could be formulated as follows: 1. Since the binding mandate itself is not enough for the implementation of economic democracy, on what grounds could council members be recalled? 2. How is it possible to ensure the competent management of an enterprise without filling the councils and the managing board solely with professional cadres? 3. How can there be any reconciliation between the role and authority of the director (manager), who symbolizes stability for external connections, with the councils' executive tasks, without either resorting to obstructionist tactics on either side or transforming the elected organs into rubber-stamp bodies that would formally approve what the manager and small group of operatives had decided in advance, possibly for the good of the factory? 4. How is it possible to avoid the "remote-controlled direction" of election meetings and to ensure continuity of experiences within the councils without electing the same persons in the executive body? 5. How can council members carry on additional burdens at the workplace without seeking privileges and without being absolved from their daily tasks? 6. If society finances the creation of new enterprises, on what criteria will the latter be founded, who will determine (and how) the need for their production, where will the workers' councils stand and what role will be assigned to them at the foundation of a new production unit? 7. If the profit of each enterprise is the supreme criterion of its success, what is the difference, from a moral standpoint, between such self-management and the free market economy as to less profitable units? 8. Since certain functions are intrinsically unprofitable, but socially necessary, what status will they have in a self-managing economy and what role will the

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and social justice cannot be attained merely through an administrative act, such as the handing over of control of the means of production from one group to another, nor is it possible to devise a form of ownership that would enable all citizens to become owners controlling the technocracy acting in the name of the boss.[27] Any truly substantive change requires the reconciliation of ethical-moral and economic criteria of redistribution, which are in turn often superseded by political motivations. The first of these criteria is that a certain minimum benefit for society must always be achieved, regardless of profit. Also, a minimum real income, constantly adjusted to the price index, should be enough to support an adequate standard of living in accordance with the level of the society concerned, while the evolving concept of "social justice" requires that the ratio between minimum and maximum rewards should not be so high as to offend human dignity or to encourage people to undertake a senseless accumulation to attain social status. Economic criteria must ensure the enterprises' profitability, the stimulation of creativity by correlating incomes to people's usefulness, professional experience, competence and dedication.[28] All of these issues are controversial. Yet there are no "objective" criteria nor any "invisible hand" to regulate socio-economic and human relations.

Self-managing units inserted within a society's economy and the international division of labor have no meaning unless not only workers but also the remainder of the population are able to assume the functions of coordination and general planning previously usurped in the name of various historical inevitabilities. Thus, the self-institution of the councils is related to a general political climate based on maturity and a feeling of security by all producers who regard it their duty to formulate and choose among alternatives. Within such a collective decision-making, absolute managerial

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councils be assigned? 9. How will it be possible to avoid creating imbalances, e.g., through the flow of workers toward more successful branches with heavy overpay? 10. How can the requirements of competition (indispensable for progress) be reconciled with the moral standards of a new society, since the byproducts of competition actually alter human relations? The answers to all these questions lie in the truly organic difference that self-management could bring about with regard to market and planned economies, i.e., by advancing solutions that will neither unleash uncontrolled market forces and the reproduction of social imbalances, subservience of everything to profit and the development of an industrial small-holders' mentality, nor will it level everyone's contributions, which, translated into a false humanism (lenience with respect to laziness, indolence and incompetency), blocks initiative and saps creative energies.

27. There could be a correlation between all enterprises that cooperate in the manufacture of a final product, but it is difficult to imagine how the regular meetings of the workers' councils of all enterprises involved could actually take place: it would be a waste of time, energies and funds. Furthermore, the plans and needs of enterprises might not coincide with the interests of consumers or of the state. In the latter case, a certain community, a county or the state might take over the functions of control-coordination-redistribution, but it is doubtful whether such a move could actually solve the problem: those becoming civil servants are seldom responsive to the public's needs. Moreover, regardless of the enterprises' nominal owners, their interests are seldom identical with those of the consumers and of society as a whole. Usually, the same form of ownership can produce quite different results from one country to another, while opposite types of ownership often have the same effects and byproducts.

28. Cf. Emilian Dobrescu, *The Optimum of a Socialist Economy* (in Romanian, Bucharest, 1978); Eugen Loebl, *op.cit.*

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authority would be nothing but the expression of the will of the many who have openly expressed their opinions, i.e., a self-discipline, freely and consciously established by producers and *reinforced by them.*[29] The gradual build-up of such a climate is organically related to the beginning of the process of equalization. In this process, seeking eventually the definitive liberation of producers from any kind of oppression, politics has to become a means to overcome the consequences of the division of labor, and especially of the conditions that generate monopoly of control and bureaucratization. Such a movement is inconceivable without a theory prefiguring the progressive broadening of liberties. Yet, regardless of its brilliance, no theory can succeed unless it expresses mass aspirations. Since only those committed to the effective practice of democracy do not abuse it, self-management units can become viable socio-economic bodies only if based on people's self-determination and ability to protect *creative* spontaneity as a major component of a civic activity unaffected by fear, scarcity, self-interest, envy or greed. Fulfilling this requirement implies finding adequate means for "the gradual emancipation of appropriation from ownership"[30] and creating new, "non-quantifiable" human values for secure producer-citizens. This goal implies civic responsibility and hence safety devices for protecting dissidence and minority opinions, which "must be guaranteed at least the right to become a majority in periodic tests of consensus."[31]

Rather than proving that self-management is an unrealizable idea, the history of workers' councils shows that it remains a challenge. The councils may be possible only in a society where human exploitation will become unprofitable, i.e., where work, as Marx put it, would not be an oppressing necessity, but the main component of the "realm of freedom." Today's world is far from the ideal built around eternal and universal human values. Prevailing systems are fairly stable and existing social structures will resist changes in directions that cannot be controlled. Consequently, every attempt for renewal based on new moral-ethical choices will face internal subversion and external pressures. Still, the creation of institutions ensuring the self-development of economic democracy and political freedoms will come when such changes will embody the collective radical need of growing numbers of people.

29. Self-control and self-discipline are necessary conditions for effective self-management. They are created through teaching in an adequate social climate and, in order to become almost innate, they require time and traditions. Until people have the freedom to establish their own motivations, some external motivations will persist (be this economic incentive or extraeconomic pressure) to achieve certain goals and to integrate "reluctants" (especially those who choose certain professions without any inclination or vocation for practicing it).

30. Feher and Heller, *op.cit.*, p. 26. This implies the development of solidarity ties while avoiding the consequences of imposed collectivism.

31. Bobbio, "Why Democracy?" *op.cit.*, pp. 46-47.

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TERRORISM AND SOCIAL CRITICISM*

by Albrecht Wellmer

Conservative politicians, social scientists and journalists often accuse "leftist" social theories of having prepared the ground for terrorism. Representatives of such theories often find it difficult, if not impossible, to react to such accusations if they prematurely step onto their opponents' terrain and accept the defensive role of the accused. For instance, the charge is made that certain statements or arguments from Marx, Adorno or Marcuse can be rediscovered, at least implicitly, in the pronouncements of the RAF (the terrorist Red Army Fraction). The person so accused, eager to prove his innocence, has no other choice but to show that the authors did not mean what the terrorists claim. But once pushed into this role, one has in fact accepted the rampant penalization of ideas and views, in terms of which the accused always lose, whether or not they prove their innocence: for they have let themselves in for proving that their ideas are harmless, and this itself suggests a bit of a promise to think only harmless thoughts in the future. To play this game entails being drawn into the reciprocal mechanism of terrorist violence and state repression, which leaves only two equally bad options open: on the one hand an unthinking indignation or a cheap distancing from terrorism, on the other hand, a senseless — though perhaps only emotional — solidarity with terrorists. Critical thought is lost along the way. If today it is made responsible because of the terrorists' simplifications, regressions and mad fantasies, that is because the German "state"being defended against terrorism all too frequently is no longer the liberal constitutional state but a status quo whose defenders have reason to fear critical thoughts. The attempt to lump social criticism with terrorism, incidentally, as has so often been the case in German history, absolves existing social conditions while blaming all evil to the critics of these conditions.

Yet, there are no grounds for regarding the RAF's terrorism as a radicalized variety of leftist or socialist politics. The left thus has every reason to draw a sharp line between itself and the terrorists. This is all the more true since, as a result of terrorist strategies, especially now the left's own existence is in danger. Certain rejections of terrorism by the left today also contain a bit of repression: namely the repression of the fact that, from an historical viewpoint, RAF's terrorism was intended as a radicalized variety of leftist politics. This is not to say that there are only biographical ties between the

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New Left of the 1960s and the terrorist groups. Thus, for instance, someone like Ulrike Meinhof, as regards her motives, her biography and her self-understanding, joined the RAF *as* a socialist. These facts cannot be repressed. The demand for solidarity still makes sense on this level — not false political solidarity with groups whose actions have long since become objectively reactionary, but solidarity with people with whom we once shared some common history — i.e., experiences, intentions, despairs.

Still, the terrorism of the RAF and other "urban guerrilla" groups cannot be understood as a radical variety of leftist politics. Rather, it objectively plays into the hands of social reaction. In the case of the RAF, for example, some basic errors and distortions were present which from the start lay at the basis of terrorism as a desperate form of social praxis. Furthermore, few mechanisms have contributed to changing objectively what was once a form of illegal praxis with social intentions into a violent criminality from the right.

The first error, or rather, the first illusion, concerns the transference of models derived from the liberation movements of the Third World to highly industrialized societies organized as parliamentary democracies.[1] This is a Mao-Fanon-Che Guevara syndrome. Once "imperialism" had been recognized as the iron vice holding together all forms of oppression and alienation and all emancipation movements on earth, RAF's members were able to interpret the emancipation problems of the First World in categories of the liberation movements of the Third World. The correct insight that social changes can be brought about only where individuals make the decision to a changing practice turned into the illusion that "a few dozen fighters who really begin to act and not merely discuss endlessly... (can) radically change the political scene," i.e. in the sense that the armed struggle of a very few could bring about the "assent of the masses" to armed struggle, thus setting in motion the emancipation of the masses.[2] Only the forcible repression of everything that a critical theory of society can learn about the possibilities of changing late-capitalist societies can render an extreme short-cut from the Third to the First World plausible. In fact, it is doubtful that the terrorists ever seriously believed this. It can be regarded, rather, as the pseudo-political rationalization of despair, i.e., despair of the possibility of political changes, which crystallized in the conviction that "armed struggle from the illegality (is) the only possibility for practical-critical activity under imperialism."[3] Now the terrorists' struggle has led to some "drastic changes of the political scene," though not in the sense the RAF members originally anticipated. Yet, even in view of this disappointment, they did not find it hard to theoretically rationalize their intention to continue armed struggle. For now they claimed that the capitalist system must be forced to declare its latent fascism openly;

1. Cf. Red Army Fraction, "Das Konzept Stadtguerrilla," in *Texte der RAF* (Lund, 1977), pp. 337ff., especially pp. 355ff.

2. Cf. Kollektiv RAF, *Ueber den bewaffneten Kampf in Westeurope* (Wagenbuch-Rotbuch), p. 43.

3. Cf. "Erklarung zur Sache" (January 1976) in Schwarze Hilfe, ed., *Der Tod Ulrike Meinhofs, Dokumentation*, p. 121.

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once political repression had reached a sufficient degree of openness and intensity, the masses would recognize their real enemies and go over to the side of armed revolutionaries. Therefore, they declared a goal of their struggle to be "to force the state to a reaction in which the structure of repression, of the repression-apparatus, becomes visible, and is thus communicated as a condition for the struggle for revolutionary initiatives."[4] The experience of recent years was not needed to recognize the futility of this idea: a look at the history of fascist Germany would have sufficed.

But even in this second case, the terrorists had protected themselves against disappointments. This protection was based on their understanding of "proletarian internationalism," since they saw their struggle as part of an international war of liberation against imperialism and the multinational organization of capital. Thus they saw themselves as already having won their support in a mass movement,i.e., in the anti-imperialist struggle of the peoples of the Third World. From this viewpoint, the intensification of contradictions and repression in the metropoles does seem to be an inevitable "retro-effect of wars of liberation of the peoples of the Third World on the metropolitan society."[5] The function of the metropolitan guerrillas is redefined: they are a Leninist cadre which will provide "a political-military vangard, a political-military core" for the people in the inevitable class conflicts of the future in order to guarantee the conditions for revolutionary activity.[6] From this perspective, those masses in the capitalist metropoles who were first seen as the real revolutionary agents seem to be potential revolutionary subjects only in the long run. For now it is no longer a question of directly unleashing emancipatory processes in the cities, but only of participating in Third World liberation struggles against imperialism at the heart of the enemy: the smashing of cities becomes the goal of armed struggle, and the urban masses now seem to be just objects of this struggle. Under these conditions, even a long-term isolation of terrorists from the people, from the masses to be liberated or an intensification of repression without a consequent growth of a revolutionary mass base for the RAF disprove the premises.

The interpretations, justifications and strategic calculations of the RAF as a whole show traits of a self-delusion because their realistic and unrealistic elements ultimately congealed into a system of ideas so secure against refutation that genuine self-criticism was hardly possible for group members. This is one of the conditions — among others for which the RAF is not responsible — that make it so hard to find the truth about what really happened in Stammheim (and other prisons). Of course, it can be surmised that the long years of isolation among the groups connected with the RAF — both during the illegal struggle and later in prisons — contributed greatly to their immunization against corrective experience. "Theory and praxis

4. *Raf-Texte, op.cit.*, p. 260.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 252.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 253.

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become a unity only in struggle,"[7] says the RAF collective in an often quoted *Spiegel* interview conducted at the time of the third hunger strike of RAF convicts. Given the context of this statement, it sounds as if it came from a faraway fantasy world; it appears to be a truth torn out of its environment and therefore leaves one almost speechless.

The following sentence appears in the same interview: "What the Bolshevik cadre-party was for Lenin, the organization of the proletarian counterpower is today, as it emerges from the guerrilla war under conditions of multinational organization of capital and the transnational structure of imperialist repression, both internally and externally." This sentence indicates once again the unreality in the Leninist, not to mention the Marxist, self-understanding of the RAF. The degree to which the Leninist conception of the party contradicts the Marxist theoretical basis can at least be explained by pointing to conditions in an autocratically governed and backward country such as Russia before World War I. In any case, this conception was associated with the replacement of terrorist movements by the rise of a Marxist-oriented workers' movement — even if one largely condemned to illegality. How problematic the Leninist conception was — though from the standpoint of pure power politics it worked — is clearly shown by the Stalinist development in the Soviet Union. Like other Leninist sects, the RAF not only applied this conception to democratically governed Western industrial societies — which already implies a considerable distortion of reality — but it carried this conception to its logical conclusion in reverse: the Western metropoles end up appearing as the St. Petersburg of a worldwide repressive system in which only the armed struggle of determined guerrillas, who assume the leadership of the enslaved masses, can put an end to the tyranny of an omnipresent capital personified as a super-czar. Only a violent jumble of images and models in the terrorists' fantasy can explain their conviction that a disruption of the cities brought about by armed conflict must lead to a better, liberated and socialist society.

Now, the original RAF was an extraordinary group of people whose self-chosen fate has aroused horror and sadness among many who were never tempted to approve of their actions. Because of their biographies, their intellect and their ties with the student movement of the 1960s, they occupy a particular place within the terrorist underground. This is also true because — no matter how unreceptive they were to critiques from the left — they had both the intelligence and the will to explain their actions publicly, and because their actions were at least in part still accessible to political interpretations. This does not apply to subsequent generations of terrorists. On the contrary, it seems that the terrorist underground, plummeting downward, has distanced itself from the original level of political reflection of the RAF, and its actions have increasingly taken on an apolitical character. This is matched by an increasing insensitivity toward the victims of violence, a broadening of those who qualify as victims of terror, a narrowing of political

7. *Ibid.*, p. 247.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 253.

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praxis to military-strategic action, a reduction of political perspectives to secondary goals such as the freeing of prisoners and, finally, the hypostatization of armed struggle to a way of life as its own purpose. This offers the guerrilla the only possibility to preserve and act out his group identity, which has shrunk to a hate relation toward the system — quite apart from the fact that the continuation of the armed struggle becomes the only chance of survival in freedom, i.e., the only chance of escaping the martyrdom of a life sentence. This is true of the old core of the RAF, but such tendencies seem to be intensifying. The increasing loss of reality is added to an increasing "particularization" and depoliticization of the action-oriented interpretations of reality. This describes one of the mechanisms which have generated a form of illegal struggle, which began under socialist aegis but has ended up with features of a violent right-wing criminality.

Two connected mechanisms seem responsible for transforming an illegal struggle with revolutionary intentions into an interplay of terrorism and reaction. The first mechanism has to do with the psycho-social effects of terrorism. It has been described by Michael "Bommi" Baumann (in his report on his experiences, *How It All Began*) and by Horst Mahler (in a television interview). Both Baumann and Mahler describe how in the context of illegality, conspiratorial mimicry and increasing pressure from the outside, the experiential and communicative gains of the anti-authoritarian phase were lost. The isolation of the group from the outside world leads to its being cut off from the experiences, needs and learning processes of those as whose representatives it has decided to act. The increasing external pressure and the group's survival problems reduce their relations to the outside world to strategic, primitive forms; people now appear only in strategic terms as various character masks (cops, sympathizers, traitors, etc.), and finally the increasing pressure turned back on the internal group structure itself. The loss of reality toward the outside is reproduced as a loss of communication toward the inside. The very life conditions of the terrorist groups force them to assimilate the most inhumane traits of the apparatuses they fight against. After having declared the naked horror, which the system they oppose spreads at its margins (Vietnam), to be the system's only reality, they adopt a form of struggle that reshapes them in the image of the system: the reduction of all their life processes to the spreading of horror. Baumann's description of this process is particularly drastic:

"Although it was always a matter of your getting away from Siemens, all of a sudden you're back there again. You stand with short hair, a suit, with everything you left behind and the people all around...react exactly the same way; they are as hardened as can be. So you have struggled all these years and done everything and suddenly here you are right back where you started.... People were ultimately broken by this, by the psychological difficulties within the group. This occurs everywhere, but you can easily reduce it if you have a broader spectrum of the outside. Or there were learning processes where sometimes strangers were present, with whom you could

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discuss, that's the way it was in all the communes.... You simply develop such beast-of-prey instincts; later you walk only like a gunman. Every sharp eye could, really, recognize you. Madness, what you do, always running around with a gun. A man who runs around with a gun transposes the center of himself to the gun, your center is where you carry the gun... You have only business contact with others; when you meet someone all you say is: 'Friend, listen, you have to get this or that for me, rent an apartment here or there, and in three days we meet here on the corner.' If he has any criticism of you, you say, 'That doesn't interest me in the least. Either you help out or you don't, clear and simple.' You become like the apparatus you're fighting against; in the end it has caught up with you."[9]

The second mechanism has to do with the political and social consequences of terrorism. Since the terrorists have consciously detached themselves from the needs, experiences and learning process of their social environment, since the strategy already contains an element of contempt for the masses they are allegedly supposed to liberate, their actions met a lack of understanding or even disgust in the vast majority of the population. In view of the weakness of republican traditions in Germany, it was easy to use a form of violent criminality that paralyzed itself as "leftist" and social-critical as the pretext for a criminalization of leftist and social-critical positions. Terrorism thus legitimates a political repression against the entire left — a repression that threatens the substance of the German liberal constitutional government in existence since the end of World War II. The preservation of the democratic republic, however, is the most important prerequisite for a socialist left that wants more and better things than the forms of democracy and public life that are possible in the present capitalist system. Because politically the terrorists accomplish nothing but a public legitimation for the reduction of basic democratic rights, because they provide legitimations for defaming the whole left and its theories, and because they have long since given up their solidarity with the democratic left, the objective meaning of their actions can only be called revolutionary. Oskar Negt is right to speak of a "pincer movement" of terrorism and reaction against the democratic republic in general and the socialist left in particular.

The most essential dimension of terrorism, however, has not yet been mentioned: the moral dimension. There are a priori grounds against the use of physical violence against individuals and especially against the taking of human life — reasons that should be self-evident to every socialist. Physical violence, the graver and more irrevocable it is, therefore always needs a special legitimation. That there are situations in which counterforce, including killing, can be morally justified is not, as a rule, challenged by liberals; examples would be situations in which violence is the only possible means to resist an unbearable oppression or an unbearable moral corruption. In certain situations there may even be a moral obligation to physical resistance or to the use of physical force. But whoever decides to use force has

9. "Bommi" Baumann, *Wie alles anfing* (Frankfurt am Main, 1967), pp. 115-128.

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a heavy burden of proof. If it can be shown that the justification of violence stems from an illusory system, i.e., from delusion and self-deception, then the consequence is not only a moral condemnation of violent actions, but also a judgment concerning the "moral pathology" of the perpetrators of violence — even when their action, as with some terrorists, takes on the moral form of selflessness.

But direct moral condemnations of terrorism as a rule display no fewer features of rationalization and interested self-deception than do the justifications of violence by the terrorists. The language of morality is in part a means of domination. The moralistic critique of terrorism becomes pure hypocrisy when it goes hand in hand with unspoken toleration, extenuation, or open justification of forms of government-organized terrorism or technologically programmed disregard for human life. The terrorists' disregard of moral norms is, however, only a reflex of the ideological function these norms exercise in society. If it were possible to redirect the moral energies vented today against terrorism to the goal of humanizing society and thereby free them of their repressive and ideological character, the problem of terrorism would solve itself. The terrorists' fundamental illusion is that such a "redirection" of moral energies and the concomitant change of modes of experience, interpretation of needs and attitudes can result from their armed struggle.

Having characterized the terrorism of the 1970s in West Germany as a form of political struggle that has become pathological, it would be helpful to deal with the causes of this pathology of the political-moral consciousness. Here, it is not a matter of adding new ones to those offered today — frequently simply constructed for political expediency. Such an effort would presuppose thorough empirical investigations. It would especially presuppose the reconstruction of the different biographies of individual terrorists. But that sort of empirical investigation could contribute to a real understanding of terrorism only if they were linked to a suitable interpretation of those problems, contradictions and pathologies of society which, as it were, form the social matrix within which terrorism could be one among several reactions. More precisely, it seems hopeless to attempt to understand terrorism (a) without treating it as the expression of legitimation problems and system pathologies of our society; (b) without explaining the irrationalist and existentialist elements in it, which it shares with other refusal strategies developed everywhere in late capitalist systems; and (c) without clarifying how the system's pathologies are reproduced and experienced by the terrorists. Such theoretical attempts cannot be extricated from political and philosophical discourses, since they are systematic attempts at a self-understanding of acting individuals about their social situation. They do not lead to a "value neutral," technically exploitable prognostic knowledge, but, at best, to the enlightenment and self-enlightenment of acting individuals about the meaning and possibilities of their social praxis.

Following Marx, Weber and Lukacs, Adorno and Horkheimer have

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already analyzed the development of capitalist societies as a process of technical and bureaucratic rationalization — detached from practical rationality — in which the increasing destruction of external nature is matched by an increasing technical and manipulative control of the individuals' inner nature and an increasing bureaucratic administration of social relations. This autonomization of instrumental rationality corresponds to a persistence of power relations even where power does not appear naked as terror — as in fascism or at the "margins" of democratically organized industrial societies (Vietnam). If modern industrial societies are analyzed from this viewpoint of "structural violence" continuing in the technical-bureaucratic rationalization processes and under cover of democratic-constitutional institutions — a structural violence that permeates even individuals' social relations and their psychic constitution — then it is self-evident that individual terrorism can, at best, appear as a form of powerless resistance that remains subject to the logic of the system and to a certain extent carries it through to its conclusion. However, a theory that understands the reality of capitalist industrial societies as a tendentially totalizing delusionary complex can no longer account for the origin of the critical intentions and experiences that call into question the universe of instrumental rationality. If one reproach can be made in connection with terrorism against the older critical theory since the *Dialectic of the Enlightenment*, it is that, in ironic agreement with the "suspicion of terrorism" leveled at the entire left today, it hardly allows one to envision forms of emancipatory praxis that would not be infected with the irrationality of the system against which they are directed. This, however, is a long way from the reproaches from the right that do not seek to criticize features of critical theory, but to criminalize its critical contents.

The reproduction process of capitalist societies generates contradictions and crises that cause the reproduction of these systems under the two marginal conditions of private exploitation of capital and representative democracy to appear at least tendentially problematic. Yet an analysis of the nature of the crisis of capitalist societies is not enough to locate clear "systemic limits." This crisis does not have an objectively clear meaning resulting in the necessary rise of a classless society, in a universe of instrumental reason shutting itself off ever more hermetically against practical reason. Furthermore, the system-threatening contradictions and crises of capitalism must no longer be sought *primarily* in economics, but on the level of *legitimation, motivation*, and *administration*.[10] These contradictions and crises are essential points of departure for an emancipatory praxis. But they are also points of departure for regressive and terrorist forms of "dropping out" of society and radical refusal. We must understand how the short-circuited experiencing and processing of contradictions and problems is connected to these contradictions themselves.

10. Cf. especially J. Habermas, *Legitimationsprobleme im Spätkapitalismus* (Frankfurt, 1975); C. Offe, *Strukturprobleme des kapitalistischen Staates* (Frankfurt, 1973); C. Castoriadis, *Postscript zur Neudefinition der Revolution, MAO-Flugblatt* (Berlin, 1974).

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The problems and contradictions deal with legitimation: (a) the democratic-constitutional self-interpretation of Western industrial societies; (b) the bourgeois ethic of achievement; (c) the individual's form of life privatistically centered on the small family and a professional career. These norms no longer seem credible, as everyday life does not even appear to reflect these values. Nor can the political decision-making processes meet individual needs. Advancing rationalization and bureaucratization processes both demand and block a self-active participation of individual subjects.[11] These norms often contradict the injustices and exploitative conditions produced by the system, and are powerless against the destructive consequences of economic and social progress. Yet these norms are used by ruling elites to conceal and justify imperialist power relations between the First and Third World. The ersatz ideology of economic growth and of "technical necessities" can compensate for this legitimation crisis as long as securing material existence and increasing private consumption are still the orientation of political behavior. For radical minorities, countercultural movements, "drop-outs" as well as for variously constituted "extra-parliamentary" forms of political opposition, that is evidently no longer exclusively the case. Bourgeois achievement ethics lose their credibility when technical qualification no longer guarantees professional success and when the pressure to achieve cannot be reconciled with the possibility of a meaningful and fulfilled life — when continuing rationalization destroys the traditional foundations of family and profession, without generating new possibilities for meaning. This point obviously affects women and men differently when women discover themselves as the oppressed and underprivileged half of society. However, there is as great an emancipation problem for men, despite men's socially recognized roles and identification patterns, to which they adapt at the price of repressing conflicts or suppressing needs. This is true of women to a lesser degree. They are confronted with a contradictory system of role expectations which are often just as inescapable as they are unacceptable. For this reason, for women the problem of meaning appears as a problem of emancipation even more than it does for men. This must be considered when speaking of female terrorists.[12]

One could speak of two main zones of legitimation crisis. The first has to do with the contradiction between universal norms of freedom, human dignity, self-determination and rational discourse, and the structures of a society, which not only constantly reproduce injustice, oppression, destruction and practical irrationality, but also use these norms to defend positions of domination. The second main zone has to do with the discrepancy between system structures and system necessities, and the conditions for developing a strong identity and meaningful life. Technical and bureaucratic rationalization destroy traditional forms of life, and thus the last foundations

11. Cf. Castoriadis, *op.cit.*, p. 33.

12. I find a beginning in this direction in Ilse Korte-Pucklitsch, "Warum werden Frauen Terroristen?" in *Merkur*, No. 357 (February 1978). Cf. also v. Paczensky, ed., *Frauen und Terror* (Hamburg, 1978).

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of a solid identity, without simultaneously generating new foundations for a universalistically generated particularity, i.e., the possibility of a meaningful life under the conditions of a consciousness that has become universalist. The amount of "alienation," "atomization," "fragmentation," and "uprooting," increasing with the complexity of modern industrial systems, goes dramatically beyond what Hegel analyzed as the "loss of morality" in bourgeois society. Those traditions, to which conservatives today are appealing once again, are either destroyed or invalidated by economic progress or technico-bureaucratic rationalization — by a society meshed with state functions. This process of destruction is not necessarily a process of enlightenment, as Marx and Engels probably still believed when they wrote: "All fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses his real conditions of life and his relations with his kind."[13] But this process could, in its destructive effects, be stopped only if it were carried to a conclusion as an enlightenment process. Conservative strategies can only block enlightenment and strengthen the system, but without bringing traditions back to life as traditions. The loss of morality generated by the reproduction process of industrial systems can be compensated for only by democratic forms of organization, which would once again bring the total societal processes into a clear connection with everyday reality and individual needs.

These two problem zones are, of course, very closely connected. Both designate social conditions under which it becomes increasingly unlikely to combine into a right and good life the needs of individuals and of the system with a universalistic consciousness. The resulting pathologies are many: 1. The desiccation of the sphere of practical rationality, and therewith a reduction of practical problems to technical-instrumental ones; 2. Regression to a pre-universalist stage of moral consciousness and, thereby, a merely superficial return to solidarity, security and meaningful life; 3. All the pathologies that result from the repression of conflicts that individuals can no longer resolve as well as of their needs, which are excluded from socially permitted interpretation and the established mechanism for their satisfaction; 4. A new cult of immediacy, i.e., an existentialist mastery of life in which the complexity of social reality is repressed, meaning and identity are sought at the expense of reality and are stabilized and lived out in forms of direct solidarity; 5. A hardening of the wounded moral consciousness toward a reality that is perceived only in total delusion, i.e., as absolute evil; such a moral consciousness remains necessarily abstract and can interpret reality only as a delusionary system; 6. The redogmatization of a consciousness that has lost all certainties of traditional life and cannot develop a meaningful

13. Lewis S. Feuer, ed., *Marx and Engels: Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy* (New York: Anchor, 1959), p. 10.

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outlook consistent with critical rationality.

It is not clear which mixture of these pathologies constitutes the terrorist consciousness. What is important here is to show that terrorism is closer to normality than our professional defenders of the state may believe, and that it reflects and exaggerates the pathologies of the system against which it is directed. Although terrorism in, e.g., the Third World and in Ireland have a different meaning and different roots than terrorism in highly industrialized states, it is necessary to take into consideration specific cultural, social and historical differences in comparing even the RAF with the Red Brigades. In Germany, the origin of terrorism cannot be understood without the background of an unmastered fascist past and without considering the fact that the republican form of government was not the result of the defeat of fascism. The legitimation crisis in Germany has a personal note because it is connected with a specific legitimation crisis of the older generation toward the younger one. It also has an historically particular note connected with a political tradition in which authoritarianism was always ranked higher than individual liberties, where obedience and discipline — even in the face of state-organized terror — still appear less suspicious than the critical questioning of violent authorities and orders.

Thus, to speak of German conditions means to speak simultaneously of their still unmastered past, which protrudes into the German present like a block of granite. This continuity between the republican form of government and the authoritarian past is anchored in political attitudes, modes of behavior, traditions and, of course, people. This continuity threatens the democratic republic from two opposite ends: by the expansion of bureaucratic domination and by the remnants of an authoritarian past. Consequently, the forces of a true democratic renewal have repeatedly been forced into an apparently hopeless defensive position. And it is equally a part of this continuity that in the German consciousness the word "terrorism" has been reserved for violent guerrilla movements, and, more generally, freedom movements of all kinds, be they matters of senseless violence by German urban guerrillas or forms of armed struggles against exploitation, dictatorship, and torture in Third World countries. Yet, state-organized terror, incomparably more horrible than scattered acts of violence by a few leftists, can always count on an understanding word from German politicians and in the German press — as long as it is not being practiced by "Communist" regimes. The sensitivity thresholds of the German public are also different. When Mescalero, on the occasion of his admittedly more than boorish attempt to articulate a political-moral critique of terrorism (summary: "Our way to socialism...cannot be plastered with corpses"), did not even defend the feeling of a "closely secret joy" at Buback's murder, but only admitted it in order to criticize it, a cry of outrage ran through the public media. Even the *Frankfurter Rundschau* (May 8, 1977) spoke of "clear fascism." The attempt by 48 university teachers and lawyers to counter the surge of outrage against the "swamps of sympathizers" in the universities by

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making the complete text of the disputed "obituary" available to a systematically misinformed public not only failed in its purpose, but adversely affected its originators and led to one of the most embarrassing episodes in the struggle against the possible or purported "sympathizers" with terrorism.[14] But when a leading defender of the free democratic constitutional state such as Strauss expresses his undisguised delight with the successes of the Chilean military dictatorship in its struggle for freedom and democracy (cf. *Die Zeit*, December 16, 1977), he need not fear an irate German public — and not only because Chile is far away.

In Germany the concept of a "free democratic order" has undergone peculiar semantic transformations leading — as in other Western industrial states — to its not only being associated with capitalism, but also being interpreted with concepts such as "order," "discipline," "state," and "security." This concept has been semantically adapted to the authoriatarian elements of the German tradition,[15] justifying terror, while terror is readily seen implicit in the critique which points to the unfulfilled promises contained in the concepts of "freedom" and "democracy". So freedom, or that part of it which does not flourish in the existing order, is, for conservatives, pregnant with "terror"[16] — as if the German problem were not, rather, to be terrified of freedom.

The attempt to link social criticism and terrorism actually conceals the interplay of terrorism and *reactio*. It runs parallel to efforts to derive legitimation for the restriction of basic democratic rights from the terrorism of the RAF, to sharpening of political repression, and to introduce a criminalization of opinion (and feeling) into the German legal code. The gradual restriction of freedoms in recent years has already led to the situation where putting forth a radical critique involves a personal risk — especially for members of the younger generation (but not only for them, as the Brücker case shows). Once again, conformity is valued higher than those virtues without which a democracy must degenerate into an authoritarian state. Even the court system equates sectors of the empirical social order with the basic core of the German republican constitution. Freedom and democracy thus become synonyms for the real power relations and the economic structures of society. Under these conditions, every form of criticism referring to unfulfilled promises of the republican canon of basic rights and freedom is seen as attacking the constituton and therefore as anti-constitutional.

14. Cf. P. Brückner, ed., *Die Mescalero-Affare*, 3rd edition (Hannover, 1978).

15. Two arbitrary examples: 1. The flowing transitions between words like "harmful to the state" and "anti-constitutional" in the use of police and politicians. Gollwitzer was expelled from Berlin in 1940 by the Gestapo for "behavior harmful to the state." In Hannover, the preparation of an action of Amnesty International was reported by the police to the federal security force as behavior "harmful to the state" by the person in question. Cf. P. Brückner, D. Damm, J. Seifert, *1984 Schon Heute — Oder Wer Hat Angst vorm Verfassungsschutz* (Frankfurt, 1977), p. 29. The expression "the preventive protection of the state" against internal enemies was already (or still) used in 1951 in a *Bundestag* debate during the Korean War in connection with a sharpening of the political penal code. It comes, as R. Schmid has shown, from Roland Freisler. Cf. Hans Schueler, "Der Justiz den Spiegel vorgehalten," in *Die Zeit*, March 30, 1979.

16. Cf. H. Lübbe, "Freiheit und Terror," in *Merkur*, September 1977.

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The creeping criminalization of critical positions has three functions: 1. It restores a good conscience regarding the pathologies of the system cited by social critics; 2. It legitimizes the sharpening of political repression; 3. It identifies scapegoats. If the left in general and leftist theorists in particular are responsible for terrorism, then society no longer need recognize terrorists as mirror images of its own unsolved problems; instead it can blame these problems on its critics and seek to solve them by silencing the critics.

The insight into the interconnection between terrorism and reaction, as well as the insight that the defense of the democratic republic has become a matter of life and death for the socialist left, should give the left the opportunity for a critical and, under some circumstances, self-critical examination of the meaning of a defense of basic human rights and freedoms. In the Marxist tradition, bourgeois-parliamentary democracy is seen as the political form of the capitalist ruling class. As Rosa Luxemburg asserted, this can only mean that it is not democratic enough, i.e., that it impedes the spread of democratic self-determination to all areas of social life — including material production which, according to the bourgeois understanding of democracy, is pre-political and should therefore remain excluded from the area of a democratic formation of the will. Thus, a democracy would be "material," if it could be experienced as a form of freedom permeating the social life context as a whole and thus determining individuals' everyday life. In the Marxist tradition this is connected with the expectation that the abolition of the restriction of bourgeois democracy — after the abolition of capitalist private property — will engender forms of social life in which freedom, solidarity and an unblocked self-realization of the individuals would coincide. However we cannot know nor could know to what extent and in what sense a future of social life would approximate this idea after overcoming such obstacles. Such a model draws its plausibility from unbearable oppression. However, this model becomes false when it regards negative conditions as the empirically necessary *and* sufficient conditions of social freedom — though this happens, as in Marxist theory, only in relation to a particular stage of historical development. Either the conditions regarded as necessary are not sufficient (abolition of private ownership of the means of production) or they are sufficient only because what is thought to be inherent in them coincides with freedom itself (abolition of alienation, of class domination, etc.). That a corresponding problem did exist for Marx is at least partly due to the fact that the negative definition of conditions of emancipation originally had entered his theory as a dialectical negation of the negation, i.e., as a historico-philosophical "temporalization" of the dialectic of dissension and reconciliation from Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*. Yet Marx was never able to really work this dialectical figure into his historico-materialist theory and it was left behind as a metaphysical residue.

However, this implies that the positive conditions of an anticipated future form of social freedom need definition, if this anticipation is not to lead to nothing. Now, it is certainly correct to argue that such a determination can

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itself only be the result of historical praxis — in the sense in which Marx spoke of the "discovery" of the political form of the commune. But that merely shifts the problem elsewhere — at least as long as one maintains the idea of a theoretical clarification of emancipatory praxis. For the problem is now posed in such a way that theory must have an adequate concept of the already existing forms of freedom, if it wishes to anticipate emancipation not as a mere negation, but as the "preservation" of this freedom "on a higher level." Daydreams about future forms of freedom — however imperfect — can lead only to an abstract negation of the existing reality and ultimately does not correspond to the strict standards set by Marxist theory itself. The consciousness of the already existing forms of freedom is, however, at the same time, the consciousness of those (positive) conditions under which social changes can take place as processes of emancipation. It is, in other words, a consciousness of what in an imaginable world remains a condition for the possibility of rational liberty.

This is not a plea for restricting practical-emancipatory fantasy. Rather it is a criticism of a false form of fantasizing revolutionary consciousness. This raises once again the issue of the reproach against bourgeois democracy that is merely "formal". This reproach usually made by that part of the Marxist left closest to Lenin is still another matter. According to this critique, the general and formal guarantees of basic rights characteristic of bourgeois democracy — especially guarantees of basic rights -- are as a whole the mere expression of bourgeois class domination and therefore become superfluous under conditions of socialist democracy. By now, however, we have gathered sufficient experience to know that this view contains a fateful error, which can result in the replacement of formal democracy by a material democracy in this second sense tantamount to the abolition of democracy and the prevention of socialism. Accordingly, it has become a matter of life and death for the left to develop a clear consciousness not only of the ideological and repressive, but also of the progressive and emancipatory contents of bourgeois democracy. This question today distinguishes the democratic left from the dogmatic and neo-Stalinist one. For the democratic left, the defense of basic rights and democratic freedoms within our society can never be merely a tactical question: it involves its own future.

Political concepts cannot be detached from the historico-political contexts in which they originated. It may be time to redefine "left" and "right" according to the relation of political groups to democratic-republican forms of self-determination. Cynicism regarding the unfulfilled promises of a democratic republic could then once and for all be abandoned to the rightists. Of course, this would not change "leftist" terrorism simply into a "rightist" terrorism; the left — i.e., the democratic left — could however defend itself more effectively against attempts at criminalization, for which the madness and acts of violence of self-styled radical vanguards provide the pretexts. That too would be a contribution to solving the problem of terrorism.

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THE NEW LEVIATHAN AND THE STRUGGLE FOR DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS*

by Joachim Hirsch

A peculiar helplessness in defining the contemporary meaning of the "state" is related to the fact that the state apparatus tends to become increasingly omnipresent, comprehensive, and at the same time stronger, more rigid, repressive and directly involved in social conflicts. Evidently, the nature of the political structure that has emerged in the 20th century in developed bourgeois societies can no longer be adequately grasped with the usual categories of political analysis, nor with the traditional tools of the Marxian theory of state.

This has its reasons. The modern leviathan can be understood only in terms of the truly revolutionary transformations that bourgeois society has undergone in the course of its ongoing development under conditions of accelerating internationalization of production. Since capitalism can preserve and develop only by continually transforming its underlying relation of production, bourgeois society is, like no other, subject to historical structural changes. In this regard, the theoretical concepts for analyzing the bourgeois socialization context are astonishingly underdeveloped. Concepts such as late capitalism, monopoly capitalism, post-industrial society are labels which often blur more than they clarify. It is therefore not surprising that explanations for the intensified political repression in West Germany — from theories on the "New Fascism" to the allusion to national peculiarities — are highly questionable or have remained underdeveloped. Yet, a precise analysis of the historical transformations of the institutional processes is absolutely necessary if the changes of the political system of domination are to be understood and adequate courses of action developed. The ideas of the struggle for democratic rights and "constitutional positions" must not become as wrong and untimely as the analytical tools with which social development is often judged.

To study comprehensively these changes of the bourgeois socialization context is a very time-consuming matter. Thus, the following is only a somewhat crude but sharp sketch of fundamental structural tendencies, departing from considerations developed mainly in the framework of French debates about the internationalization of capital starting with Gramsci's early works, — this analysis will apply the concept of "Fordism" as the decisive change of production relations around mid-20th century. This concept tries to grasp more rigorously than Marxist theory has previously done the connection between the development of technology and work processes determined by the world market, and related changes in the reproduction of the labor force. Thus, the development of metropolitan societies can be described as

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comprehensive "*trans-capitalization*," (*Durchkapitalisierung*) i.e., the progressive "real subsumption" of not yet capitalistically structured social areas. The resulting tendencies of progressive social *disintegration* are the basis for the penetration of the state into the entire reproductive context and the resulting new form of "security state." This type of state, corresponding to the "Fordist" socialization context, is so different from earlier forms that some of the traditional ideas of democracy and of democratic struggle must be considerably revised.

The far-reaching social transformations that have taken place in the last decades are a product of the dynamic of capitalist development. In brief, capital cannot reproduce itself under unchanging relations of socialization, but is compelled to constantly overturn and reorganize them on a world scale. With constant accumulation, the relative increase of the production of surplus value is imperative for the preservation of profits and the survival of this society, i.e., growth is always necessarily "qualitative." However, this does not refer simply to the technical advance of the productive forces, but means a radical structural change of the context of social reproduction as a whole which Marx had not really considered. Thus capitalist development does not simply imply the technological transformation of the production process (rationalization, Taylorization, and intensification of labor), but the permeation of all areas of life by capitalist relation: the radical division of labor on a world scale, the tendency to subjugate all social production under conditions of wage labor (the elimination of domestic, craft, and small-farm economies), the abolition of traditional "pre-capitalist" forms of life and social relations (the disappearance of traditional cultures, coerced mobility, urbanization), the replacement of the subsistence economy and self-production by capitalistically produced commodities and sevices and hence the ever more far-reaching determination of the social contexts by supplies of commodities and services, the imposition of capitalist time-rhythms even in the "sphere of reproduction" and the progressive commodification of all social relations.

The modern "Fordist" socialization context is based on the fact that the extremely intensified and Taylorized production of mass consumption goods and services has become the essential sphere of exploitation for capital, that social labor is increasingly taking the form of wage-labor, and that material and psychic reproduction is becoming increasingly dependent on capitalistically produced goods and services. This development, which began to win out only around the middle of the 20th century, is an essential condition both for the increase of productivity and for the relative decline in the value of labor power. Its social consequences can hardly be overestimated. Its significance is perhaps most obvious in the changes family life has undergone: the limitation of the family connection to the two-generation small family of today; the mechanization of the household through "labor-saving" appliances and the resulting liberation of women as (cheap) labor; the sharp separation of work and free time, in which the latter increasingly becomes the

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sphere for the consumption of industrially produced goods and services; the transformation of the family into a consumer community in order to compensate for deprivations and stress at the work-place (auto, pre-fabricated house, a higher standard of living) — whereby the compulsion to expand compensatory consumption chains one all the more firmly to the capitalist work-process; the replacement of family and neighborly communication through a multiplicity of media offerings, the products of the leisure-industry and through advisory services of all kinds.

The process of Fordist trans-capitalization via the Taylorization of work, coupled with attachment to the mass consumption of products and services produced as commodities, merges social production and reproduction into a seamless functional complex in which decision-making by others becomes all-dominant. Domestic industry and earlier forms of production are judged unproductive from the standpoint of capital and largely replaced by machines, finished products, and commercial or bureaucratic services. The result of this development is a tendency to progressive social disintegration which engulfs numerous social areas: the destruction of traditional forms of production and their accompanying life-contexts dissolves functioning social milieus into masses of atomized workers and consumers (particularly obvious in the often bemoaned desolation of bedroom suburbs). The spatial and vocational mobility required by the constant transformation of technology and the resulting "structural change," together with permanent processes of occupational re-education undermine neighborly, professional and family ties as well as community connections. Furthermore, the intensification of work, which is rapidly increasing in the course of the internationalization of production, accompanied by a simultaneous increase of structural unemployment, results in a growing social marginalization: permanent unemployment, peripheralized labor markets, illness, compulsory dropping out of the "achievement society."

Isolated, defunctionalized, and at the same time overcharged with compensatory emotional claims, the small family not only loses its ability to secure material reproduction in old age and sickness, but it also fails as an agency of socialization, whose function would be to introduce the new generation to their role as workers and consumers. Against the background of increasing drop-out movements and an expanding drug-scene, it is not accidental that the "crisis of the family" has become a permanent political theme. While capital relations at the beginning of the industrialization phase could develop by growing into and exploiting existing pre-capitalist social structures and natural resources (rural population as a work-force reservoir, the family as social security, nature as "free productive force"), in the course of its full implementation it dissolves these conditions and gradually destroys them. But that means that the social production of the production conditions — of nature and man — must become a matter for social regulation.

The socialization context of developed capitalism is stamped by contradictions produced by these rampant processes of social disintegration:

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with the growth of the capitalist abundance of commodities, the abolition of the traditional contexts of production and social life in fact increases material insecurity and the danger of social marginalization in the event that age, illness, unemployment or disqualification force one out of the Fordist production-consumption circle. At the same time, manifestations of social disintegration and concomitant "socialization deficits" are met by an intensified pressure to adapt. More than ever, individuals are required to fit efficiently and flexibly into permanently changing working conditions, life-situations and consumption standards. A technically complex international production machinery, differentiated by a division of labor, and and a transcapitalized system of reproduction and consumption require both usable workers and adaptable consumers. Eccentrics, individualists, unadaptable persons become disruptive factors, unless they are banished to marginal social areas. The autonomous bourgeois individual is no longer in demand: a good basis for the psychostructures and modes of behavior that have recently been labeled "narcissistic."

The more the natural reproduction context and social cohesiveness disintegrate, the more inevitable does bureaucratically-organized regulation become. This applies to management of the material reproduction context, where not only the process of immediate capital exploitation (currency, structure, and subvention policy), but to an ever more comprehensive extent even the reproduction of the labor force must be administered by the state ("social policy" in the broadest sense), whereby the apparently ever tighter "social security network" is by no means a matter of charity, but a sheer material necessity. In addition, this regulatory process structures the adaptation of individuals, their social conditioning and the impeding of dysfunctional deviations by means of numerous bureaucratic maneuvers. An example of this is the modern government-regulated educational system: a particular apparatus to convey not only specific qualifications, but also the control and bureaucratic conditioning of the new generation. When family, communal and neighborhood contexts lose their efficacy, they are replaced by police, school and social work.

That capitalism must "develop" workers as specific producers and consumers, and that this process goes hand in hand with an increasing expropriation, functionalization and structural dependence on a centralized bureaucratic apparatus, is the essential societal basis of the modern security state. It is marked by the extension of central bureaucratic networks for regulation, monitoring and control, by means of which the state apparatus becomes increasingly ingrained into the social fabric and blends with social structures. The state's penetration of society is the other side of Fordist disintegration. "Security state" therefore designates a mode of social organization which can be described only inadequately and ideologically by traditional terms such as interventionist state, social state, bureaucratic authoritarianism, etc. It is less true than ever that the state "intervenes" from the "outside" in an essentially self-regulating social process. The relation of

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"state" and "society" it presupposes has long since become obsolete — along with the social basis of liberal constitutional principles. The state is the central component and the essential functional factor of the social reproduction context and interweaves with it down to its finest ramifications. State-organized social security is not only necessary for the availibility of usable and willing workers, but also the absolute precondition for the continuity of the mass consumption necessary for exploitation. Thus, insofar as smooth adjustments and conditions, i.e., the prevention of dysfunctional behavior patterns, have become a central social problem, the government appears to be both the materially supporting "caretaker of existence" and the controlling, repressive "surveillance state." They are just two sides of the same coin.

The tendency to expand surveillance and control functions is also based on the fact that the Fordist form of bureaucratically regulated socialization does not function smoothly, but produces conflicts and crises. The intensification and Taylorization of work produce not only stress and waste, but also "surplus consciousness," which becomes aware of expropriation and disqualification — for instance, in the form of the refusal to submit to the conditions of capitalist labor or the need to reappropriate expropriated abilities. The same is true of the contradiction between the mass supply of goods and services, and the possibilities of real satisfaction of needs ("poverty through abundance of commodities") that causes consumerist ideologies to crumble. This becomes clearest in the growing resistance to the destruction of nature by the Fordist production-reproduction mechanism. Social disintegration, destruction of the social milieu, continuous transformation of social norms and values, disqualification, expropriation and structural unhistoricity lead to a persistent "crisis of meaning" with ambivalent consequences which are to be managed by a further perfection of surveillance and repression as well as by a bureaucratically controlled ideological mobilization. If the "Fordist way" of a profit-stabilizing reorganization of the conditions of social utilization has definite limits and that stronger pressures on the rate of profit in the context of an international economic crisis must lead to an even more far-reaching social restructurings, structural unemployment, and marginalization, an increase of these conflicts and hence a tendency to the repressive perfection of the security state can be expected.

The Fordist transformation of the capitalist mode of socialization and the consequently changed meaning of the state result in a modified structure of the bureaucratic-political apparatus, in the bureaucratic perversion of society, and in new connections between the state apparatus and social institutions. Thus the boundary between "state" and "society" becomes particularly obscure. The means of domination are more closely connected with the social centers of power, while traditional political institutions change their internal structure, their meaning, and their relation to one another. This becomes especially clear with the transformation of parties and mass associations into mass-integrative apparatuses. The machinery of the modern

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"popular parties" could develop only on the basis of progressive social disintegration, i.e., class rejections and divisions, the dissolution of cultural milieus (consider the significance which the dissolution of traditional workers' cultures and of the Social Democratic club life has had on the transformation of the SPD into a "popular party"). Separated from direct social connections and specific interest groups, the parties appear as quasi-state apparatuses, whose function is hardly "the formation of the political will" in the traditional sense, but rather the systematic channelling of claims, the control of possibilities of political participation, as well as the mass-integrative protection of central-bureaucratic strategies.

These mass-integrative apparatuses are based on the disintegrated socialization context, and at the same time they strengthen it through the segmentation of interest groups, systematic exclusion of social problems, and especially through the repressively buttressed maintenance of their political monopoly (from state financing of the parties to the control of the state-run media). Bureaucratically structured, rigidly controlled by the leadership of government and party, and relying less and less on the active political work of "rank and file" members, they are now of hardly any use as vehicles for political influence and discussion. Combined with similar tendencies in the unions, this structure forms the basis for the "Modell Deutschland" and neo-corporativism in comparable countries. In the context of the institutionalization of class distinction (an essential precondition of the Fordist production and consumption context), an economic and political regulation cartel develops out of the web of party and trade union and state bureaucracies which guarantees the smooth implementation of exploitable changes of social structure, the political securing of marginalization processes and the exclusion of non-productivist (e.g., ecological) interests.

While mass-integrative apparatuses are characterized by state domination and are less than ever in a position to serve as instruments for an authentic formulation and implementation of popular interests, a tight system of state and semi-state bureaucracies, which often combine functions related to surveillance, control and welfare, spreads to all areas of life. This too becomes perhaps clearest in the family, which — in order to be preserved as a function of consumption and socialization, despite increasing manifestations of disintegration — is permeated by an ever tighter net of regulatory and control apparatuses: courts, juvenile bureaus, state, free and denominational therapeutic agencies, housing offices, administrative and medicinal complexes controlling birth-control, role model producers, social bureaus, and social workers. Here it is less and less a question of the treatment of "deviants." The "normal population" has now become the object of this regulatory and control network. The same is true of the control of the reserve army of those permanently or temporarily marginalized by labor and social agencies, training and continuing education institutions, the law-medicine alliance and psychiatry. Juveniles who have not yet been fully integrated into the Fordist production-reproduction circle see themselves especially exposed

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to surveillance and control agencies — from schools to the narcotic agents. With the increase of social marginalization tendencies, training institutions function only as apparatuses for the qualified selection and adaptation of the labor force, and more clearly as the disciplining and monitoring institutions for the potentially unemployed. The net of normalization experts with police functions, i.e., social workers, teachers, doctors, counselors, caretakers, and controllers, is becoming more tight-knit and encompassing, as the policed character of society by means of psychiatric and pedagogic processes is advancing.

Indeed, it seems that the normalizing control of individuals — their social integration into the Fordist production and consumption context, the repression or elimination of resistance and deviation as well as the prevention of any incipient collective appropriation of living conditions or the recognition of shared interests to overcome social disintegration — is developing into a decisive problem for the political and economic existence of developed capitalist societies. That is the reason for the tendency to expand the bureaucratic regulation and control apparatuses and to develop complex combined systems of social security and surveillance, e.g., the social work-psychiatry-police-legal complex.

On this basis it is possible to form a comprehensive security apparatus, encompassing the various administrative and political agencies. Its institutional center is the computerized police and internal security offices with their systems of obtaining data about individual behavior, problem situations, and social conditions, reaching deep into the web of state and non-state regulatory agencies, combining and short-circuiting them, defining security situations and social pathologies, while steering socialization and repression agencies. This security apparatus is not a specific, definable agency. Rather, the concept implies the functional unity of a network of agencies, organization, commissions, and staffs in relation to the underlying socialization condition: a unity of various components which at first seem heterogeneous and unrelated. The more the dynamic of capitalist society generates pathological social conditions, disintegration, deficits of material and psychic reproduction, selective deprivation and at the same time diffused resistance, the more there is a need by this security apparatus for detailed information about individual, social conditiitions and problem zones.

These shifts also explain the peculiar change in the significance of the social sciences. Their integration into the domination context is based less on their function as ideology producers and more on their ability to provide social "investigative knowledge." Thus, they too tend to become elements of the security apparatus: accompanying social processes, investigating problem zones, researching into individual and collective modes of behavior and motivations. The espionage directed against ecology groups with the help of social-scientist research institutions is just one better known example of this development.

Ignoring the division of bureacratic functions as well as political

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differentiations, the security apparatus thus increasingly takes on the features of a "state within the state," which transcends bureaucratic segmentations, reverses checks and balances, while turning administrative responsibilities upside down. It is this change of the state's institutional structure that guarantees its ever more seamless intermeshing with the finely ramified networks of social power and permits it to penetrate into the family, private life, clubs, organization and plants, while at the same time assuring the disciplinary and normalizing role of the police apparatuses (the agencies of state bureaucracy, the parties, labor unions, and mass media) against internal and external "deviations." The exclusions from the professions (*Berufsverbote*) in public service and the expulsions from parties and trade unions based on internal security intelligence are just one sign of the extent to which the political-bureaucratic apparatus is in turn controlled and "normalized."

Of course, the basis for the establishment of the security state is at the same time the cause of its weakness: as never before, the national states are limited in their actions and determined by a world market which escape their control; they are compelled to merely react to the processes of social restructuring which this sets in motion. Furthermore, the advancing processes of social disintegration, to which the security state owes its existence, produce at the same time continuous problems of overloading, bureaucratic blockages and apparently increasing legitimation deficits.

The state seems to be the core of a comprehensive system of social regulation and normalization, which simultaneously aids, monitors and controls. It acts both as a welfare agency and as an extra-constitutional power apparatus *vis-à-vis* social and political dissidents. It is no accident that the modernized variant of the authoritarian state in the Federal Republic of Germany was implemented under a Social Democratic administration and was endorsed almost without reservation by labor unions, while efforts were underway to undermine the basic principles of democracy and constitutional government with the help of democratic and juridicial means. The bourgeois-democratic constitutional government is in a state of crisis not only because those in power at the moment are destroying it, but because its social foundation is in a process of decline. Assuming that the traditional form of constitutional government was linked with the existence of a "natural" social reproduction mechanism (market) and just as "natural" normalizing and socializing structures (family, autonomous social milieus), then their break-down logically implies the tendency to establish the extra-constitutional "instrumental state" operating opportunistically according to "security situations." The bureaucratic emergency situation that has always been typical of parts of traditional social welfare is becoming general; the "supra-legal emergency condition" is gradually becoming the normal condition of state-administrative action. This is implicit in the logic of a profoundly disintegrated "normalization society" (for which precisely the state of emergency is the normal state of being). If this analysis is correct, then efforts to secure democratic rights result in the following consequences: 1. The

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authoritarian transformation of the political system is not a German peculiarity but, with a few modifications, represents a standard tendency for all developed capitalist countries. Yet, for the Federal Republic, war, fascism and the particular political conditions of the post-war period favored the Fordist transformation of social conditions and weakened any resistance. Simultaneously, a traditionally strong state and a weak democratic tradition promoted the development of the security state. The remarkable strength and competitiveness of the West German Republic is, as far as the political organization of society is concerned, comparatively advanced in the international context: the much cited "Model Germany." Thus, it appears a general social and political tendency in capitialist metropoles. Nevertheless, the decisive element is the change of the material socialization context on a world scale and less the peculiarities of a particular political culture which would have to be corrected through democratic enlightenment.

2. The security-state's organizational permeation of society is based on the fact that material reproduction under existing economic conditions can be achieved only through comprehensive state-administrative regulation: material security and repressive normalization-control form a unified functional context. Therefore, mere attempts to limit state encroachments and to save classical principles of democracy or of the constitutional state fall short since they ignore the changed socialization context. Of course, the legalization of social relations connected with the all-pervasiveness of the state is causing an increase in the number of small, often temporary but tactically useful points for the resistance to state attacks — conflicts concerning nuclear energy are a good example. Yet, this legalistic net is weak and always stands at the disposal of courts and legislatures. Formal legalization must not hide the fact that the "encroachment" lies, so to speak, in the very structure of the security state, which permeates society down to its most minute ramifications. This is clearest in the case of data protection which is threatening to become a veritable labor of Sisyphus against myriads of "abuses," while the basic problem — the ever more comprehensive gathering and storing of data by central bureaucracies for social regulation and steering on the basis of the economic and bureaucratic status quo — is not at all readily posed: it makes little sense to plead abstractly for the abolition of departments of labor, social aid bureaus, school, or juvenile welfare offices. However, in terms of the overall structure, precisely these agencies always display a dual character: material security and welfare side by side with control and repression. This explains why resistance to the spread of the security state is relatively weak and tends to assume the form of a diffuse antibureacratic resentment: despite everything, the state is still desperately needed. Consequently, the struggle for rights and liberties cannot be carried out just as a political dispute on the level of laws and institutions, but must be linked with the concrete transformation of prevailing social conditions. In the long run, the security state may not be influenced by traditional forms of legal restraints and institutional control. What is necessary, instead, is a "reduction of the role of the state" in the sense

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of a collective reappropriation of responsibilities, self-management, autonomous interest organization, debureaucratization and decentralization. The Fordist society, in its security-state organization, produces this conflict — for example, in the form of "new social movements" such as ecology. This also applies to workers' attempts, modest as they are in Germany, to control their working conditions and to offer practical resistance to the ever more difficult effects of a reorganization of production for the world market. These beginnings must be built on. The realization of human rights and freedoms will in the long run depend on whether the development of concrete perspectives and initiatives for these social changes succeeds. This program, valid despite the ambivalence of these movements, will necessarily conflict with the attempts of the dominant power groups to exploit anti-state and anti-bureaucratic resentments for quasi-populist, reactionary mobilization campaigns and social-political austerity strategies. Nor can such a program be carried out with a division of labor between a democratic struggle and social change. The campaign to secure democratic and constitutional government structures can hardly be waged except as a socio-political offensive, because a defensive policy in view of the prevalent social tendencies necessarily carries the seeds of its own failure.

3. The power structure has become more complex and tight-knit as a consequence of the close connection between state apparatus and the network of social institutions. It is this comprehensive web of agencies of social regulation and control as a whole that threatens democratic rights and possibilities of development. The expansion of the practice of exclusion from the professions (*Berufsverbot*) and the persecution of radicals in formally non-governmental areas are such examples of ties between state and "private" agencies, e.g., industrial computer data centers. The tentacles of the modern leviathan reach far and are very finely ramified. Therefore, the control and restriction of state agencies is far from enough. At issue is the encroachment of a power structure whose range of action have a tendency to become universal.

4. In a society in which autonomous cultural traditions are increasingly succumbing to disintegration and bureaucratically produced isolation is becoming a structural trait in which man and nature increasingly appear as products of capital's strategies mediated by the world market and bureaucratic maneuvers, the merely negative definition of human rights as defensive rights is not enough. But it is also insufficient to expand them to include the welfare norms of the social state. First of all, it must be underscored that social disintegration and the "pervasive expansion of the state" have also led to the undermining or restriction of a whole series of traditional dependencies and power structures, which have always characterized bourgeois society — from family repression contexts to the disinfranchisement of those who have sold their labor power. In that sense, social disintegration and pan-statism also imply an increase of scopes and possibilities and the restrictive legalization of economic power relations. They

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are thus quite ambivalent. Yet, the more social and natural conditions of life are understood as socially produced, the greater the need for a concrete determination of what human rights mean — especially what the social conditions of their realization are. Otherwise, they quickly degenerate into empty slogans. Can there be a right to untouched nature? Hardly, if we must assume that our entire environment is already socially produced. The question will be under what social conditions will what kind of nature be produced. With the destruction of the traditional social contexts, the consensus concerning "basic values" must become increasingly questionable. Meanwhile, the concept itself has sunk to the legitimating propaganda formula of the rulers. Therefore, also the abstract definition of the real goals of the struggle is no longer sufficient, and a concrete determination can develop only from attempts to change working conditions, ways of life and social structures. Even in this respect, the defense of democratic rights and freedoms can hardly be separated from movements for social change.

5. The latter item points to the question as to the social substratum and agency of such a struggle. The self-emancipating bourgeois class has — insofar as it appeared in Germany at all — long since disappeared as the bearer of a liberal and democratic political culture, just as the labor movement, as an emancipatory political force, has fallen victim to the Fordist socialization context. Some things point to the fact that this society both demands and produces passivity, adjustment and strategic opportunism, impedes the development of autonomous abilities to dispose over one's own life conditions, and cannot allow stable action and value orientations to develop. The bourgeois individual seems to be dead, just as the old bourgeois society has yielded to the Fordist one. What this means is that no objective determination of a class structural social basis for a democratic struggle is possible. Most likely, it will proceed from very heterogeneous and segmented struggles, hardly definable in "class" terms, constantly produced by the Fordist socialization context.

6. The differences between "bourgeois" and socialist positions in relation to the meaning of freedom and human rights seem to be levelling out on the basis of real social development. All the more so since the break between the "bourgeoisie" and the middle classes is getting deeper as a result of changes in the social structure. "Citizens" and "bourgeois" are becoming separate things. Similarly, socialists have both in theory and in practice renounced certain old options of the proletariat as the vanguard of the class struggle and the state as the means of social change. The new contents of freedom and democracy, which are bound up with demands for an independent realization of interests as well as wtih concepts of a decentralized and communal society, do not fit the old political labels. The Fordist restructuring of society has rendered possible a "civil struggle" aiming for an emancipatory social change against the current end product of capitalistic social development. Gorz's formulation of a "citizen society" displays a social goal which could unite socialists and radical democrats — and not just defensively or tactically.

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Notes and Commentary:

NINE THESES FOR A FUTURE LEFT*

by André Gorz

I

"Full employment," like all indefinite growth of commercial production, will have been just a parenthesis in contemporary economic history. We have entered the era of the abolition of work. The fact that the crisis of capitalism gives it the form of a calamity should not lead us to forget that the abolition of work and the liberation of time are themes as ancient as work itself. In the sense in which we understand it today, *work* did not always exist: it appeared with capitalists and proletarians. Today it designates an activity that we do (1) for someone else's benefit; (2) in exchange for pay; (3) according to forms and schedules set by the one who pays us; (4) for ends we have not chosen ourselves. The truck farmer performs "work;" the child cultivating his onions in the yard is performing a free activity.

Today work [1] designates primarily a paid activity. The terms work and job have become interchangeable: "work" is no longer something we *do* but something we *have*. We say "to look for work" or "to create work" in the same sense as "to look for a job" or "to create jobs."[2]

A constrained, heterodetermined, heteronomous activity, work is seen by the majority of those who look for it and those who "have" it as a sale of time whose object is of little import: we work "at Peugeot" or "at Boussac" and not "to make" cars or cloth. We "have" a good job or a bad one, however, depending on how much we earn, and only secondarily according to the nature of the tasks and conditions for accomplishing them. We can have a "good" job in the armaments industry and a "bad" job in a health care center.

Work is not liberty, because for both the wage earner and his employer work is just a means of earning money, not an activity with an end of its own. Of course, all work, even on the assembly line, presupposes that the workers put something of themselves into it: if they refuse, everything stops. But this labor necessary for the factory to function is at the same time negated, repressed by the organization of work. That is why the idea that we must be liberated *in* work and not only *from* work — *from* work and not only *in* work — is as ancient as wage labor itself. The abolition of work — the abolition of wage labor: the two things were synonymous in the heroic age of the labor movement.

II

Wage labor differs from self-determined activity in the same way that exchange value differs from use value: work is performed mainly for a wage that devotes its utility to society and entitles one to receive a quantity of social work equivalent to the one we have furnished. To work for a wage thus means to work to be able to buy from society as a whole as much time as we have furnished it.

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1. The etymology of the French *travail* is *tripalium*: a three-posted apparatus whose activation subjected its operator to torture.

2. The point seems linguistically more convincing in French, where the words are *travail* and *emploi*. — *Translator's note.*

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Self-determined activity, on the contrary, does not have as its principle aim the exchange of my time for that of others: it is its own end when it is a matter of aesthetic (i.e., play, including love as play) or artistic activities; when it is a matter of productive activity it creates objects destined for consumption or use by the same people who produced them or people close to them.

The abolition of work is a liberation only if it permits the development of autonomous activities.

To abolish work thus does not mean to abolish the need for effort, the desire for activity, the love of workmanship, the need to cooperate with others and to make oneself useful to the collectivity. On the contrary, the abolition of work is just the progressive, never total, suppression of necessity we find ourselves in of buying our right to live (practically synonymous with the right to a wage) by selling our time, our life.

To abolish work and liberate time: to liberate time so that individuals can become masters of their body, of their own employment, of the choice of their activities, of their ends, of their works, are exigencies to which the "right to be lazy" has given an unfortunately reductive translation. The need to "work less" does not have as its meaning an end "to rest more," but to "live more," which means: to be able to do for oneself many things that money cannot buy and even a part of those which it currently buys.

Never has this need been so pressing, for a number of reasons that interact, reinforcing and legitimating one another.

III

The most directly perceptible reason is that the abolition of work is a process that is already going on and seems to be accelerating. For each of the three main industrial countries of Western Europe, independent forecasting institutes have estimated that automatization will in ten years abolish four million to five million jobs, without a radical change in the length of work time, in the ends and nature of activity. Keynes is dead: in the context of the current crisis and technological revolution, it is absolutely impossible to re-establish full employment by a quantitative economic growth. The alternative is rather between two ways of managing the abolition of work: one that leads to a society of unemployment, the other to a society of free time.

The unemployment society is the one that is being progressively installed before our eyes: on the one hand, a growing mass of the permanently unemployed, on the other, an aristocracy of protected workers and, between the two, a proletariat of endangered workers performing the least qualified and least grateful tasks.

The free-time society, however, is emerging only in the interspaces of and as a counterpoint to the present society: it is based on the principle of "everyone working less and engaging in more self-activity." In other words, socially useful work, divided among those who want to work, ceases being the exclusive or main occupation of each person: the main occupation can be a self-determined activity or group of activities performed not for money but for the interest, pleasure or advantage we find in them.

The way of managing the abolition of work and its social mastery are central political stakes of the coming decades.

IV

The social management of the abolition of work presupposes that we put an end to the confusion that, under the influence of Keynesianism, has arisen between the "right

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to work" and (a) the right to a salaried job; (b) the right to an income; (c) the right to create use values; (d) the right to have access to the tools needed to create use value.

The necessity to distinguish the "right to a job" from the right to an income had already been stressed at the beginning of the second industrial revolution (Taylorism). Like today, it seemed at the time that the reduction of work time required for the production of necessities called for new distribution mechanisms, independent of market laws as well as of the "law of value": if products fabricated with minimum quantities of work ought to be purchasable, then the means of payment had to be distributed to the population without regard to the sales price of work. Ideas like those of Jacques Duboin, notably, about a distribution money and a social income guaranteed for life, continue to circulate under various forms mainly in Northern Europe.

The social distribution of production in function of needs and not in function of solvent demand has long been a central demand of the left. It is increasingly ceasing to be so. The right to "social income" (or "social wages") in part abolishes "forced wage labor" only in favor of a wage system without work. It replaces or complements, as the case may be, exploitation with assistance, while perpetuating the dependence, impotence and subordination of individuals to the central power. This subordination will be overcome only if the autonomous production of use values becomes a real possibility for all.

In the future the split between "right" and "left" will be based less on the social wage than on the right to self-production (*autoproduction*). The right of self-production is basically each base community's own right to produce at least a part of the goods and services it consumes, without therefore having to sell its work to those who hold the means of production nor to buy goods and services from others.

The right of self-production presupposes the right of access to tools and their conviviability.[3] It is incompatible with private or state industrial, commercial, and professional monopolies. It consequently causes a decrease of commercial production and of the sale of work in favor of autonomous production based on voluntary cooperation, exchange of services or personal activity.[4]

Self-production will develop in all fields where the use value of time turns out to be greater than its exchange value: i.e., where what one can do for oneself in a determinate time is worth more than what one could buy by working for a wage during that time.

Only in combination with effective possibilities of self-production will the liberation of time succeed in overcoming capitalist logic, in withering away the wage system and market relations. Effective possibilities of self-production can evidently not exist for all without a policy of collective arrangements aimed at supporting their existence.

IV(b)

Autonomous activity must not be confused with "domestic work." As Ivan Illich has shown,[5] the notion of domestic work arose only with a type of sexual division of labor proper to individualism: industrial civilization locked woman in domestic tasks which were not directly productive so that the man could spend all his waking hours and

3. As opposed to programmed tools, Ivan Illich gives the name "convivial" to "tools which favor each person's aptitude to pursue his aims in his own inimitable way."

4. On the importance of voluntary association in libertarian communist thought, see Claude Berger, *Marx, l'Association ouvrière, l'anti-Lénine, Vers l'abolition du salariat* (Payot, 1974).

5. "La Troisième Dimension de la Technologie," in *Co-Evolution* I (Spring 1980), B.P., 43, 75661 Paris Cedex 14.

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energy in the factory or mine. The woman's domestic activity therefore ceased being autonomous and self-determined: it was both the condition and the subalternate appendage to the male's wage labor, which itself was considered essential.

The idea that the wage worker should be relieved of domestic tasks, regarded as base, while wage labor is supposedly noble — this idea is typical of capitalist ideology which carries it to absurd lengths: it does not take into consideration the object, meaning and nature of an activity but only its wage remuneration. It leads to considering the housewife's activity vile, and this same activity noble when it is performed for others and for pay, as in a nursery, on an airplane, or in a night club.

To the extent that working time diminishes in favor of free time, heterodetermined time tends to become secondary and autonomous activities determinant. A revolution of customs and an overturning of the system of values thus tend to confer a new nobility to the family or housekeeping activities and to abolish the sexual division of tasks. This abolition is well advanced in Protestant countries. The road to women's liberation is not via wage remuneration for domestic work [6] but via an association and a cooperation among equals who, within the family and the broadened family, share all tasks both inside and outside the home and if necessary take turns at various roles.

V

The abolition of work is neither acceptable nor desirable for all those who identify with their work, making it the center of their lives and who can or hope to be able to realize themselves in it. The social subject of the abolition of work will thus not be the stratum of professional workers who are proud of their trade and aware of the real or potential power it confers on them. For this stratum, which always was hegemonic in the organized labor movement, the appropriation of work, of the means of work and of power over production remain the central strategic objectives. Automation, to the extent that it undermines the workers' class power over production and the possibility of identifying with work (or even of identifying work itself) is perceived by the class of professional workers as a direct attack on their class. Their main concern is to repel this attack, not to deflect its means toward ends contrary to their assailants'. The defense of work and of its qualification, not the control of the mode of its abolition, will thus be the central concern of traditional labor unionism.

This very thing condemns it to the defensive.

The abolition of work is, on the contrary, a central objective for those who, whatever they have learned to do, feel that their work will never be a source of personal enjoyment for them, nor the main content of their life — as long, at least, as work will be synonymous with fixed hours, predetermined tasks and limited skills, assiduous toil for months or years, the impossibility of carrying on their own activities, etc. These "allergies to work," in Rousselet's expression,[7] ought not to be considered marginal. It is not just a fringe, but the actual or virtual majority of the "actively employed" who consider their work to be a fastidious necessity in which it is impossible to become fully involved.

This non-involvement is due in part to the divergent evolution of the cultural level, on the one hand, to the type of qualification required by the majority of occupations, on the other: occupations tending to become intellectualized (i.e., to appeal to mental operations more than to manual ones) yet without stimulating or fulfilling

6. Which would lead merely to replacing the housewife's alienation with that of the domestic servant, the wife's sexual service with that of the prostitute.

7. Jean Rousselet, *L'Allergie au travail* (Le Seuil, 1974).

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intellectual capacities. Hence, the impossibility for the workers to identify with their work and to feel that they belong to the working class.

So, I call this stratum which experiences work as an external obligation by which "one loses one's life in earning a living," a "non-class" of "non-workers"; its aim is not the appropriation but the abolition of work and the worker. And this is what makes it a carrier of the future: the abolition of work has no other possible social subject than this non-class. I do not imply by this that it is already capable of taking the process of abolishing work under control and of producing a society of liberated time. But I say that the latter will not be able to be produced without or against it, but only by or with it. The objection according to which we cannot see how this "non-class" would take power is irrelevant: its obvious incapacity to take power proves neither that the working class itself is capable of it (if that were the case, this would be known) nor that power ought to be taken, rather than reduced and controlled, if not abolished.

VI

To consider the non-class of non-workers as the potential social subject of the abolition of work does not relieve one of an ideological or ethical choice: the choice is not between abolishing work *or* re-establishing complete trades in which each person can find happiness. The choice is between the liberating and socially controlled abolition of work or its oppressive and anti-social abolition.

For it is impossible to reverse the general (social, economic and technological) evolution in order to reinstate complete trades entirely and for everyone, assuring to autonomous teams of workers the mastery of production and the product, along with personal enjoyment. The personal character of work is necessarily blunted to the extent that the production process is socialized. Its socialization necessarily entails a division of labor, a normalization and standardization of tools, procedures, tasks and knowledge. Even if, following the current tendency, relatively small and decentralized units of production replace the industrial mastodons of the past; even if the brutalizing repetitive tasks are abolished or, when they cannot be, are divided among the entire population, socially necessary work will never be comparable to the activity of master craftsmen or artists: a self-determined activity of which each person or team sovereignly defines the modalities and the object, the inimitable personal touch that puts one's particular mark on the product. The socialization of production necessarily implies that the microprocessors or the ball bearings, the sheet iron or the motor fuels be interchangeable no matter where they were produced, and thus that work as well as machines have interchangeable characteristics everywhere.

This interchangeability is, moreover, a fundamental condition for the reduction of the duration of time and the distribution of the necessary social work among the whole population. The proposition, as old as the labor movement, that tends to obtain a 20 percent reduction of work time by hiring a corresponding number of supplementary workers, implicitly supposes the interchangeability of workers and their work. If 1,000 people working 32 hours can do the work for which 800 people working 40 hours would be enough, this work must not require irreplaceable personal qualities of those who do it. On the contrary, it is the employers who are opponents of a reduction of working time who declare it to be technically impossible under the pretext that there are not enough workers with the required qualities.

The depersonalization, standardization and division of labor are thus at once what permits the reduction of the working time and what makes it desirable: each person's work *can* be reduced because others *can* do it instead of one, and it *ought* to be

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reduced so that I can have different, more personal activities.

In other words, the heteronomy of work, a consequence of its socialization and its multiplied production, is also what makes possible and desirable the liberation of time, the expansion of autonomous activities. To believe that "self-management" can make work complex, personal and enjoyable for everyone is a dangerous illusion

VII

In every complex society, the nature, modalities and object of work are, to a great extent, determined by necessities over which individuals and teams have but a feeble grip. They can, of course, succeed in "self-managing" the production plants, in self-determining the working conditions, co-determining the conception of machines and the definition of tasks. But as a whole these remain no less heterodetermined by the social process of production, i.e., by society insofar as it itself is a big machine. Workers' control (erroneously called workers' "self-management") in reality consists only in self-determining the modalities of heterodetermination: the workers apportion and define their tasks within the framework of a division of labor pre-established on the level of the whole society. They do not themselves define this division of labor nor, for example, the manufacturing standards for ball bearings. They can eliminate the mutilating character of work but not confer on it a character of personal creation. This kind of alienation is inherent not only in the capitalist relations of production, but in the socialization of the production process itself: in the functioning of a complex machine-like society. This alienation can be mitigated in its effects but it cannot be abolished.

However, it does not have just negative consequences as long as its insurmountable reality is recognized. And to recognize its reality means above all to recognize that there cannot be complete coincidence of the individual with his social work, and that, inversely, social work cannot always be a personal activity which the individual enjoys completely. "Socialist morality," by demanding that everyone commit himself totally to his work and confuse it with his personal ends, is oppressive and totalitarian in its root. It is a morality of accumulation, symmetrical with the bourgeois morality of the heroic age of capital. It identifies morality with the love of work while at the same time depersonalizing work by its very industrialization and socialization: it thus demands a love for depersonalization, i.e., the sacrifice of oneself. It is opposed to the very idea of the "free development of each person as end and condition of the free development of all" (Marx). It runs counter to the morality of liberation of our times, which originally dominated the labor movement.

The reconciliation of individuals with work is made possible by the recognition that, even subjected to workers' control, work is not and must not be the essential thing in life. It must be just one of its poles. The liberation of individuals and of society, as well as the reduction of the wage system and of market relations, is made possible by giving preponderance to autonomous activities over heteronomous ones.

VIII

When I speak of the non-class of non-workers as the (potential) social subject for the abolition of work, I do not claim to replace Marx's working class by a different class invested with the same type of historical and social mission. The working class, in Marx or in the Marxists, had (or has) a theological character by the fact that it is a subject that transcends its members: it makes history and society through them but without their knowledge. It is the subject idea by which the workers are thought in

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their truth; it is unthinkable by them in its subject-unity, just as the organism is unthinkable by the thousands of cells that compose it or as God is unthinkable by his creatures. That is why it has been able to have its priests, its prophets, its martyrs, its churches, its popes and its wars of religion.

The non-class of those refractory to the sacralization of work, on the contrary, is not a "social subject." It has no transcendental unity or mission, and consequently no holistic conception of history and society. It is thus, so to speak, without religion or God, without other reality than that of the people who comprise it: in short, it is not a class, but a non-class. And precisely for that reason it has no prophetic powers: it does not proclaim a subject-society by which the individuals will be integrated and saved; on the contrary it reminds the individuals of the necessity to save themselves and to define a society compatible with their autonomous existence and their ends.

This is the property of nascent social movements: like the peasant movement, the Protestant movement and the labor movement, the movement of people who refuse to be just workers has a libertarian core: it negates order, power, the social system, in the name of everyone's irrescindable right to his own life.

IX

This right, certainly, can be affirmed only if it corresponds to a power that the individuals draw not from their integration into society, but from their own existence, i.e., their autonomy. It is the construction of this autonomous power that defines the nascent movement in its present phase. Scattered, composite, it is by its nature and its aims, refractory to organization, programming, the delegation of functions, integration into a constituted political force. That is its strength as well as its weakness.

Its strength, for a different society, permitting new spaces of autonomy, can be born only if individuals have first invented and put into practice a new autonomy and new relations. Every change of society thus presupposes the extra-institutional work of cultural and ethical change. No new liberty can be conceded from above, by institutional power, unless it has already been taken and practiced by the citizens themselves. In the movement's nascent phase, the citizen's distrust of institutions and established parties reflects essentially its refusal to pose the problems in the habitual forms and to consider as solely decisive the debates on the better management of the state by the parties and of society by the state.

Its weakness, however, for the spaces of autonomy conquered from the existing order will be marginalized, enclaved or subordinated to a dominant rationality unless there is a transformation and a reconstruction of society, its institutions, and its laws. The preponderance of autonomous activities over heteronomous work is inconceivable in a society in which the logic of the marketability, profitability and accumulation of capital remains dominant.

This preponderance is thus not just an ethical and existential stake but a political one. Its realization presupposes that the movement not merely open, by people's practice, some new spaces of autonomy, but that society, its institutions, its technologies and its laws be made compatible with this expansion of the sphere of autonomy. The transformation of society in accord with the aims of the movement will in no way be an automatic effect of the expansion of the movement itself. It presupposes a specific, i.e., a political, thought, action, and will. The fact that the post-capitalist, post-industrial, post-socialist society [8] which is aimed for here cannot

8. In the Marxist definition, socialism is the stage of transition to communism. During this transition, the development and socialization of productive forces are completed, and the wage

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and must not be integrated, regulated and programmed to the same degree as those that preceded it, this fact does not dispense one from posing the question of the functioning, the juridical bases and the balance of powers of this type of society. Non-integrated, diverse, complex, pluralist, libertarian, it is nonetheless a society among other imaginable ones and needs to be realized by a conscious action.

I do not know what form this action and the political force capable of leading it can take. I know only that this political force is necessary and that its relations with the movement will be and ought to be as conflicting and tense as the relations between the (anarcho-syndicalist) trade union movement and the workers' parties have been. The subordination of one to the others has always resulted in the bureaucratic sterilization of both, especially when the parties confuse their political act with their control of the state apparatus.

I have deliberately left this question open and suspended. In the current phase, one must dare ask questions to which one does not have the answer and to raise problems whose solution still remains to be found.

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system is retained and even expanded. The abolition of the wage system (as the dominant form of work, at least) and of market relations is supposed to be realized later, with communism.

In the industrially developed countries a stage beyond socialism has already been reached: the current political task, as proclaimed already in 1969 in *Il Manifesto*, goes beyond socialism, i.e., to communism as originally defined.

The use of these ideas has become difficult because of the perversion and demonetization of socialism and communism by the regimes and parties that claim to represent them. The crisis of Marxism, which extends even to language itself, must, however, not lead one to renounce thinking capitalism, socialism, their crisis and what comes afterward. The conceptual instruments of Marxism remain irreplaceable and to reject them *in toto* stems from an attitude as infantile as to consider *Capital* to be revealed truth, despite its expansion and its incompleteness.

NARCISSISTIC POLITICS IN ATLANTA

by Adolph Reed Jr.

Atlanta has recently become a focal point of national and international attention because of a mysterious series of murders of local black children. Reporters have come from around the world and visitors to the city immediately press Atlantans for news, inside dope or the latest updates as they express their sympathy and solidarity. The sentiments no doubt are genuine and the outpouring of befuddled, curious concern is understandable, especially given the apparent senselessness of the killings. However, this phenomen has another side beyond the personal and collective tragedy of the murders themselves.

Indeed, the Atlanta child murders can serve as a micrological window on several important trends in contemporary American life. These tendencies can be illuminated by discussing four discrete but related themes. These issues are: (1) the increasingly consolidated stratification of the black community and the growing subordination of those Afro-American strata who exist as clients of the social-administrative apparatus;

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(2) the disqualification of the American mass public from interpreting and organizing its own experiences and the emergence of the therapeutic professions and their ideologies in legitimating and reinforcing that disqualification; (3) the rise of homosexuality as a political stance and militant social agenda that exposes the moral bankruptcy of protest pluralism to the contradiction between a sexualized definition of political liberation and the exploitation of class weakness; and (4) the inadequacy of the contemporary left as a source of critical vision and the Reagan administration's intensification of social insecurity.

Even prior to Reagan's announcement of his new program of regressive income transfer, the situation among this country's urban poor had been deteriorating, and Atlanta is a case in point. In Atlanta, the gap between median income earned in the poorest and richest census tracts widened significantly between 1960 and 1980.[1] That trend gains more importance when one realizes: (a) that the poorest tracts are 93 percent black and the richest are 97 percent white, and (b) that the 1960s were a period when segregation and institutionalized job and pay discrimination were unchallenged in Atlanta. Yet to completely fill out the general social context in which the Atlanta events are enveloped, the following phenomena should be noted: (1) the highly visible, much discussed, and mostly exaggerated growth of the black elite since the 1960s civil rights movement in general and its impact on recruiting black public officials in particular; (2) the circumstance that race has functioned rather like a form of capital for much of this elite with which it can leverage claims for status, power and income; (3) the insecurity engendered among this stratum as the stock exchange for its racial capital, the affirmative action apparatus, is threatened by Reagan's supply-side ideologies; (4) the local political arrangement in Atlanta that allowed the Chamber of Commerce to govern the city directly for a generation with little mediation and no opposition, not even from the subordinated black elite,[2] and in which the reigning business elite (spearheaded by real estate developers dependent on public funds) has remained ambivalent to the black political regime ushered in nearly eight years ago; (5) a local Sun Belt boom economy whose growth is a post-World War II phenomenon based first on transportation and warehousing, then increasingly on paperwork industries and the convention trade and in which the labor market is divided between relatively high paying paper-pushing jobs and very low paying "service" sector jobs; and (6) a racial demography approximating the model of the small southern town in which the railroad tracks separate the overwhelmingly black territory of South Atlanta from the overwhelmingly white one of North Atlanta. These are the salient environmental features in which the child murders have taken on the guise of a cruel farce.

Much has been made by various interested parties — the trendy national press, community activists, aspiring populist politicos — of the circumstance that a year or more passed and several children were killed under apparently similar conditions before local authorities decided to take special measures, only after much of the citizenry already had suspected a pattern linking a number of the murders. This lag can be attributed with good reason to the class background of the affected children.

1. These figures are taken by an analysis of poverty in Atlanta conducted by the City of Atlanta in connection with the Mayor's Action Conference on Poverty in Atlanta.

2. Floyd Hunter's two studies of Atlanta instructively trace local power and decision-making — always winding up at the door of the Chamber of Commerce. See Hunter, *Community Power Structure* (Chapel Hill, 1953) and his update *Community Power Succession* (Chapel Hill, 1980). For a view from within see Ivan Allen, Jr., *Mayor: Notes on the Sixties* (New York, 1971).

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This problematic interpretation, however, glosses over the mediate cleavages within the black community and substitutes a simplistic, manichean view held by the black elite which can be easily refuted.

Those sympathetic to the administrative apparatus' view that criticizes this black elite for selling out their people tend to assert that the lag in systematic police response expresses a malevolent insensitivity to the non-privileged strata of the black population. This interpretation has been particularly attractive to protest activist types whose knee-jerk response was to denounce the racism of the local power structure for the lag in police mobilization. The racism thesis in this case, however, collapses given Atlanta's black mayor, black city council majority and black police chief. Even though racism has been replaced by the elite insensitivity as a cause for the slow official response to the problem, the malevolence typically ascribed to racist motives continues to be implied as a basis for the black elite's perceived insensitivity. Not only is it unreasonable to suggest that black city officials are unsympathetic, but the activists' need to adduce evil motivations to explain the black officials' actions indicates the confusion that surrounds discussions of the black elite in general.

Stratification in the black community is anomalous in the ideological frameworks of black activism. Despite its often militant rhetoric, the critical horizons of such activism are circumscribed by the outlook and social strategies of pluralist liberalism. Hence, in the activist purview, the black community must appear in principle as a unified public bound by common interests. The black public officials, whose office-holding is a result of that same pluralist activism, share this outlook. The predictable tendency, in turn, is for these public officials to universalize their personal and collective interests as those of the entire black population. Thus, for both public officials and activists, any differentiation of black interests takes on an aura of improbity or treason. In this context, the rules dictate glossing over and suppressing manifestations of stratification. When situations occur that demand acknowledgement of stratification, such as the case of the murdered and missing children, any behavior that represents the non-collective interests is regarded as an evil deviation and demonic, rather than simply self-interested, motives are imputed to the deviants. Of course, there is a connection between the stratification of the black population and the lag in police response to the killings. The connection, however, is not as simple as proponents of a sell-out view of black class differentiation have argued. Rather, the connection emerges at the nexus of pluralist urban politics and local bureaucratic decision-making in Atlanta.

In the absence of direct public pressure, patterns of urban service provision tend to follow inertially along courses largely determined by bureacratic decisions. The victims in Atlanta have come from the most dispossessed sector of the city's population — the stratum of clients of the social welfare apparatus. In this stratum, life most nearly approximates the totally administered society, and its members are least likely to make any demands of the social-administrative system. As the number of murdered children grew, a pattern seemed to emerge. Yet, since no demand came initially from the affected parents and communities, no significant pressure existed to re-allocate police resources to an investigation of the killings. Only after the murder of Yusef Bell and the pressure mounted by his mother, who is an articulate and relatively well educated person, was a special police task forced formed to investigate the cases.

If the children had disappeared from more affluent or socio-economically mixed areas, community pressure would have been brought to bear much sooner on city officials to take extraordinary action. This would have happened if only because the

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black city officials live in such neighborhoods and would have greater contact with the affected families and concerned parents. As it stands, however, the victimized neighborhoods are almost uniformly those housing the poorest elements of the black welfare community. Therefore, even among the attentive black public, this problem remained posed in the third person, which did not mobilize political activism. Such mass quietism reflects the differentiation of the black population not only along lines of socio-economic status but also of political aggressiveness and activism. When coupled with the black elite's tendency to understand and project its agenda ideologically as that of the entire black population, the tendency among the most dispossessed to not challenge the social-administrative apparatus does not bode well for protecting the interests of this increasingly isolated and administered client population. Yet, another, more subtle theme in the child murders also discloses the significance of black stratification.

Once the cases had become designated officially as a general public concern, therapeutic professional groups began an intense campaign to clinicize any discussion of and all responses to the problem in order to consolidate a role for themselves in managing this administratively defined crisis. Social workers, child psychologists, psychiatrists as well as various public and private therapeutic functionaries began expostulating the emotional ramifications of the allegedly existent but as yet undocumented [3] problem of "increasing fear" among Atlanta's children. Not only is the existence of this problem proclaimed without any substantive justification, which presumably should violate some canon of professional method, but developments in the murder cases indicate that the children reportedly paralyzed by fear are not those who are actually in danger.

Plainclothes police conducted an experiment in the most affected areas in which young males fitting the general profile of the victims were enticed to enter strangers' cares with offers of money. Each child approached would enter the car for $10.[4] Given that many of the children were last seen in daylight hours and that one was last seen hawking merchandise at a shopping center, the results of the experiment indicate that the victims were not taken forcibly from the streets. Rather, they were lured, almost certainly by money, to accompany their killer voluntarily. Those children who have the most to fear therefore hardly seem paralyzed by fear. On the contrary, the exaggerated self-reliance common among so-called street kids contributes to their vulnerability. Moreover, in light of the previous considerations of the social-administrative apparatus, reports of emotional trauma are far more likely to be experienced among upper income and more highly educated sectors of the population, whose children are relatively safer anyway since they are not susceptible to the lure of a few dollars.[5] This mobilization of the therapeutic cadre, then, undoubtedly rises from within the black elite itself. Apparently, the fears of this elite

3. What appears to be the only empirical statement on the magnitude of this purported emotional crisis was made in early April 1981, by a high functionary on the Atlanta Board of Education. Barbara Whittaker, speaking on a late-night television program devoted to the problem, informed listeners that no increase in referrals to counseling had been reported by school personnel. Even though Whittaker alluded to the possibility of some unspecified other indicators of increased emotional instability, the one concrete datum she marshalled tends to refute the therapeutic line.

4. Both therapeutic functionaries and political officials have revealed their own ideological commitments by taking care to emphasize that the kids were enticed with offers to *earn* rather than beg money — as if misery is somehow ennobled by the work ethic!

5. One might wonder whether the black elite has not done its children a disservice in this case through its ideological disposition not to see distinction in the black community.

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have generated a legitimizing demand for therapeutic professional services whose providers, of course, are highly visible among the black elite itself.

Yet, more than legitimation is at stake here. Of the initial $979,000 federal grant to Atlanta in connection with the missing and murdered children, the greatest proportion was designated for mental health counseling and related programs. Furthermore, in early April, Health and Human Services Secretary Richard S. Schweicker granted the city an additional $304,000 for mental health related programs to combat emotional trauma. Thus, once again, the welfare state apparatus rationalizes corporate capitalism's propensity for turning someone else's tragedy into the raw material for profit.[6]

The ease with which therapeutic functionaries have been able to establish their agenda of services also indicates the convergence of the larger dynamic of personal disqualification, the progressive extension of the therapeutic mode as a vehicle for mass subordination and the general spread of a narcissist outlook through American culture. The general disqualification of individuals from becoming competent to understand, organize and direct their own daily lives in the increasingly fragmented mass capitalist marketplace is buttressed by the assertive state apparatus as it usurps competing authority structures such as the family. In Atlanta, the state has legislatively restricted juveniles' rights of movement, both via curfew laws and an ordinance curtailing peddling activity by minors. The curfew raises strong questions of constitutionality inasmuch as it provides that parents can be held culpable and punished for their children's violations. However, both ordinances set up city hall as the legitimate arbiter for determining appropriate child-rearing behavior in circumstances that do not clearly warrant such an intervention.[7] Moreover, it is clear that both ordinances basically are class legislation. As a practical matter, the only children enjoined from peddling are those who need to peddle. The only children and parents subject to enforcement of the curfew are those without other suitable entertainments. In this regard, it is instructive that one of the strongest supporters of the present curfew legislation is a city council member who introduced similar legislation in 1978 in response to the Chamber of Commerce's concerns that the central business district was overpopulated at night by unoccupied black juveniles, whose presence was offensive to conventioneers.[8]

The prominence of the therapeutic outlook has helped legitimate these actions by divorcing them from political discussion, which is deemed inappropriate and insensitive, and locating them in the realm of clinical practice. The curfew, therefore, by definition cannot violate juveniles' rights because it is enacted in their best interest and with the approval of professional expertise. Unlike the Soviet Union, however,

6. Naturally, the therapeutic professionals are not alone in this enterprise. In addition to several very ordinary con men who have been arrested for unauthorized solicitation of funds, the local ABC affiliate has taken a cue from its network's ratings coup during the Iranian hostage spectacle and has added a nightly program — after the late news — on the "crisis of our children" or some such theme; the program has been a showcase for therapeutic ideologues. Moreover, community activist careers have taken on a new vitality and visibility, and the victimization of impoverished children has given hints of opening activist or community service functionary career possibilities for certain of the more articulate clients of the welfare state apparatus.

7. Clear and present danger does not seem to be a sufficient justification in this case since there is no indication that a curfew is any deterrent to the killings.

8. The council member in question is black and leads feckless searches for bodies and-or clues. The council member who produced and militantly defends the anti-peddling ordinance is a black woman who occupies a post in a black middle-class district and who is elected at large, on a citywide basis.

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where therapeutic subordination stems from the police, in this case there is the additional mediation of a narcissist cultural disposition. Thus, these increasingly diminished selves, which already are inclined to comprehend life as a quest for authenticity, can be mobilized to accept their personal subordination and therapeutic direction as the only valid mode for addressing any social phenomenon.

The narcissist element in contemporary politics — as pluralism has eradicated the public good in the competition of narrowly self-interested groups — has been present in the Atlanta situation in other ways as well. More concretely, the culture of narcissism has surfaced with homosexual political activism as a new power center demanding that its interests be acknowledged in the murder investigations. After reports indicated that as many as ten of the murdered boys may have shared a link to a homosexual house of prostitution, local homosexual political activists took affront at the implication, which had been just beneath the surface of much public discussion of the killings, that the murders may be sex-related, as in Chicago and Houston. Homosexual bloc's insecurity about this issue has been exacerbated by the belief that gay activists see themselves on the verge of major advances in local political influence. This year, a gay activist candidate will most likely wage a serious contest for a city council seat in a district that has become a major center of Atlanta's gentrification. What is more, homosexual activism gradually has presented an increasingly unified and growing public posture generally in city politics. The issue of juvenile homosexual prostitution in this context clearly becomes a vulnerable one for homosexual activism. Over the last several years, the "chicken trade" has received considerable local publicity, as Atlanta remains a terminus for runaways from all over the Southeast, and as it has become, as local propagandists put it, the "gay capital of the South." As homosexual activists strive for basic legitimacy and general coalitions with leftist, black and feminist groups, any identification of this bloc with pederasty could jeopardize the movement's short-term objectives.

Still, no organic links actually exist between homosexual activism and the other pluralist centers with which it seeks political links. Beyond a very general statement on the right to individual sexual freedom, it is not clear what common agendas the movements share.[9] Gentrification, in Atlanta as elsewhere, is an issue that separates homosexual activists from the poor, elderly and other socially marginal groups with which to seek alliance. Moreover, except for the sexual freedom issues, much of the homosexual electorate tends toward the right rather than the left. Perhaps no issue here is more sensitive than juvenile prostitution, and hints of its implication in the murdered children cases immediately brought an instructive response from activists.

In a press statement on April 8, 1981, a spokesperson for a coalition of local gay organizations, while acknowledging that children are driven to prostitution by economic considerations, proceeded with unconscionable cynicism to stand reason on its head by arguing that the youthful homosexual prostitutes should not be seen as exploited children but rather as masquerading heterosexual exploiters of older "gays." The coalition went on to blast the police and news media for so much as alluding to possible homosexual connections on the ground that such reference constitutes

9. In this regard the movement seems caught in an internal contradiction for which no adequate resolution may exist. In so far as sexual preference is the connecting thread of homosexual activism and the ultimate demand is not subjected to public judgement for one's sexual, and therefore private, preferences, then the appropriate orientation would appear to that extent, other than as one of an interchangeable array of private choices of all types for which public judgement is disallowable, homosexuality appears as not properly a political issue at all.

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discrimination, a position that indirectly indicates the public-private contradiction of homosexual activism. This charge was illustrated with a fatuous reference to the fact that the local media had not identified President Reagan's would-be assassin, John Hinckley Jr., as a heterosexual. The gay activists' hysteric reaction also uncovered the lingering tension between gays and the black community given the fact that the poor, young black people's vulnerability has long constituted a human reservoir for urban, casually exploitable sex, both homosexual and heterosexual. Clearly, every major city in the United States has its areas where impoverished black juveniles congregate to participate in homosexual prostitution. Thus, if one were to construct a "political economy" of homosexuality, crude exploitation most likely would be found as a prominent aspect of the homosexual nexus in the black community. The reaction of Atlanta's gay activist coalition to the official suggestion of a homosexual link in the murders was entirely self-serving and it suggested an opportunist subordination of collective concern with the police investigation to the requirements of homosexual pluralist agitation. Thus, the gay reaction imitates both the defensive response of the business community, which fears that the killer is white, and the opportunism of the left, which hopes to capitalize organizationally on the tragedy.

Whatever else it may or may not have done, the Reagan administration — if only by the choice of symbols and images it has wrapped around itself — has conveyed to dormant racists and militant ultra-rightists that their element is coming back, if not to power, at least to respectability. Klansmen, Nazis and other such flotsam have been heartened by the apparent successes of the strategy advocated by Falwell and Helms and the radical right. In fact, they have been moved to take violent action as the recent lynching of a black youth in Mobile, Ala., demonstrates. At the same time, Reagan's budget cuts, especially the CETA cuts, have accelerated the growing insecurity of poor communities. In this context, the Atlanta murders easily could be attributed to a grand white racist conspiracy. The rag-tag groups of black and white leftists and surviving black nationalists, who are all too ready to speak for and organize residents of the affected communities, favor this line. Yet, the conspiracy line cannot be supported by local political officials who are committed to avoiding inflammatory situations in the city and to maintaining a hidden repudiation of anyone who challenges it — the cover-up charge. This outlook offers yet another example of the opportunism and underdeveloped critical vision that characterize the heirs of the New Left legacy. Both limitations were demonstrated clearly in a recent controversy over armed resident patrols in a housing project.

A cadre of local activists went into the project located in the poorest area of the city to organize the frustrated residents by advocating armed vigilantism as a response to perceived ineffectiveness of police service to the area. Arrests were staged after posturing with guns (that were later revealed to have been unloaded). Since the initial controversy, the area has been penetrated by a legion of baseless political groups that tail behind every minor expression of disaffection in the community, hoping to transform it into the basis for a mass movement. The Techwood bat patrol case, however, offers insights to the obsolete character of this orientation and the weaknesses it suffers as a result of its revolutionary mythology. Confronted with a situation in which black constituents of a black regime elected with overwhelmingly popular black support were dissatisfied with their receipt of a public service, the activists responded by urging these citizens to surrender their claims on the public service delivery process in favor of a self-help strategy of community self-defense. This posture recalls on the one hand a period when blacks were unable to make claims on local public service

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allocations and, on the other, discloses a characteristic of the revolutionary mystique — an assumption that appropriate political action must totally repudiate current political and administrative agencies as inimical to the ends of total transformation. In this case, such posturing leads to the absurd situation in which radicals deny the propriety of demanding equitable delivery of public services.

Ironically, not long after the controversy in Techwood Homes, the first victim was taken from that area. So thus is the circle completed. After all the machinations of leftist sects, homosexual activists, self-indulgent businessmen, therapeutic functionaries, would-be and actual politicos and the others, the killer continues to punctuate the real tragedy: the total domination and helplessness that define clientage in organized capitalism.

RETHINKING RADICAL POLITICS

by Moishe Gonzales

Despite some exceptions, such as the recent Socialist victory in France, over the last few years the Left has been badly defeated almost everywhere — from China to the United States and England. Even in Latin America and Poland, where there has been considerable social unrest, it is not the historical Left but rather other social agencies, such as the Catholic Church, that have provided the moral strength and political commitment necessary to sustain the challenge. Discredited mostly everywhere, the Left has only been able to mount a weak resistance to the growing impact of the Moral Majority, Muslim fundamentalism or their functional equivalents. But the Left does not seem to realize the extent of its failures [1] and this compounds the problem, since

1. It is not clear what kind of ideological weed Michael Harrington was puffing while writing "Eurosocialism Takes Off" in the May 30, 1981, issue of *The New Republic* (pp. 15-18). According to his overly euphoric account of the rise of Eurosocialism, in recent years there has been no turn to the right. It only seems that way. Leftist defeats were really owing to socialists' mistakes of winning on the eve of a world economic crisis. Allegedly, "it was incumbents, not socialists as such, who were being turned out of office." This same logic, for reasons unknown, does not seem to apply to the one case in which this explanation would make sense, i.e., to the recent Mitterrand victory in France (on the basis of as insipid a program as one can imagine) or the possible but remote chance of Craxi's forming a new government in Italy (at the head of the only socialist party that could match the Christian Democrats during the years of the *Centro-Sinistra* in corruption and incompetence). This is, presumably, because "Eurosocialists have been redefining the meaning of 'left' over the past decade or so." And what is this new meaning? Nothing but "a decentralized, often non-statist vision of socialism" plus "industrial democracy on the shop floor." But what is new about industrial democracy or decentralization? These ideas date back at least to the Paris Commune of a century ago, and have always been part of Left theory and debate. Worse yet, almost a century of elaboration of these ideas has resulted in the conclusions that: 1. Far from being a "democratizing" movement, the workers' councils were weak defensive institutions developed to oppose capitalist rationalization reducing skilled craftsmen to the level of homogenized and readily interchangeable abstract labor. On this see Sergio Bologna, "Class Composition and the Theory of the Party at the Origins of the Workers' Councils Movement," *Telos* 13 (Fall 1972), pp. 3-27. 2. Because of the particular development of industrial technology in this century, the division between "knowing"

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such a recognition must precede any future reconsideration. It is for this reason that proposals for serious rethinking of what the Left is or should be are urgently needed. Michael Walzer's *Radical Principles* and the new series of *Praxis International* propose to undertake precisely this type of re-examination and thus merit careful study.

Both documents are representative of major sections of the American and international Left establishments respectively, and an analysis of their content helps explain why recent setbacks have taken place. One need only run through *Praxis International's* editorial board to find there almost all leading international leftist theoreticians with any respectable batting average. And Walzer is even more explicit about his political identity: not only is the book dedicated to the *Dissent* Mafia, of which he has been a card-carrying member since the late 1950s, but in a burst of unrestrained honesty, he does not hesitate to "blame them all for the incomplete, short-sighted and wrong-headed positions" he has defended and advocated.[2] Sure enough, there are so many of them in the book that no single culprit could possibly be responsible for such a dastardly deed.

For a work on *Radical Principles*, this book contains very few — and none of them radical. Stitched together into sections on liberalism, the New Left, social change and social democracy, 18 essays written over a period of 15 years attempt to market as "the rare voice of moral sanity"[3] that same discredited liberal claptrap he otherwise criticizes elsewhere. Far from being the "reflections of an unreconstructed democrat," as the book's subtitle states, they are an afterthought of a reconstructed liberal. As one of the leading exponents of the left-wing of the New York culture industry, Walzer has unwittingly written a political testament for a social-democratic perspective that became exhausted with the New Deal, the New Frontier and the Great Society.

The so-called radical principles are readily enumerated and forgotten around page 10 — and for good reason. The principles — "individual freedom, dignity, responsibility, equality, mutual respect, hard work, craftmanship, honesty and loyalty" — are even more trite than motherhood, baseball and apple pie (although with feminism, the baseball strike and crash diets these days, their obsolescence is becoming increasingly clear!). Confronted with such a list of principles, fundamentalists, Republicans and other brands of conservatives would at best insist only on adding a few of their own. So what is so radical and distinctive about them?

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and "doing" has been built in the productive process itself so that attempts to reunite them without major changes in technology as well as in the labor psychology developed with it will result in either considerable decline in efficiency (see Andrei Silard, "On the History of the Workers' Councils," in this issue of *Telos*), or in a relegitimation of precisely the hierarchical structures and divisions to be eliminated (cf. Joachim Hirsch, *Der Sicherheitstaat. Das "Modell Deutschland," seine Kreisen und die neuen sozialen Bewegung* [Frankfurt, 1980]). 3. Even if the workers' councils were efficient and immediately viable democratizing institutions, given the development of capitalist rationalization rapidly eliminating large numbers of jobs and precipitating a massive unemployment crisis (see Antonio Carlo, "Unemplyoment," *Telos* 38 [Winter, 1978-79], pp. 5-31), they would be condemned to becoming conservative institutions committed to the defense of existing social relations and the privileges of a diminishing organized labor aristocracy (see André Gorz, *Adieux au Proletariat* [Paris, 1978]). Furthermore, the failure of *Mitbestimmung* in West Germany and Northern European countries, as well as the dismal performance of the Yugoslav councils in the last three decades should at least lead to a serious rethinking of the whole idea in the context of ongoing capitalist rationalization. At any rate, it is clear from Harrington's article that, despite his efforts to prove the contrary, the official Left is theoretically bankrupt.

2. Michael Walzer, *Radical Principles: Reflections of an Unreconstructed Democrat* (New York, 1980), p. 301.

3. From the book's dust jacket.

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Nothing, Walzer argues, since, after all, "socialism is the effort to sustain older values."[4] In fact, "democracy and socialism are, roughly speaking, the same thing: two forms of procedural justice."[5] The task of socialists and democrats, therefore, reduces to sharing and legitimating authority and property. Undistinguishable from liberals on any but mostly semantic grounds, it is not at all surprising that *Dissent* social democray and DSOC (its political arm) have comfortably blended into the mainstream of the otherwise disintegrated Democratic Party.

Notwithstanding their ideological and political conformism, contemporary social democrats *à la* Walzer remain a peculiar brand of liberals. Their Marxist unconscious burdens their outlook with a theoretical baggage that prevents them from freely negotiating their way through the twists and turns of recent history.[6] Thus, traditional ideological figures such as "the workers" are still seen inextricably engaged in "the class struggle" to precipitate the advent of the welfare state, which, unfortunately, generates new and unanticipated consequences: consumerism, community disintegration, lack of participation in voluntary associations. Walzer seriously believes that the working class forced the bourgeois state to change into the welfare state. Most recent post-New Left studies tracing the processes of Americanization, consumerization and general homogenization necessary for the successful relaunching of organized capitalism in the 1930s go right by Walzer.[7] But most of all, that the working class in the United States and elsewhere was hopelessly defeated in the 1920s is equally forgotten. Presumably, since workers seem to have benefited from welfare state reforms, they must also have brought them about.

Flattened out into legitimate pluralist interest politics, "the class struggle" smoothly feeds into liberal ideology. Substantive issues evaporate into procedural ones and the dialectic of the Enlightenment unfolds unimpeded. As in the famous Kantian critique, however, genuine substantive issues cannot be successfully resolved into procedural or formal ones. Worse yet, whenever an analysis so legalistically and formalistically constructed attempts to confront the real world, it tends to generate a whole series of politically stultifying antinomies. And this is precisely what happens when Walzer tackles any significant question.

Take the welfare state — which is discussed in the first chapter. Walzer is extremely ambiguous about it. On the one hand, he praises its social achievements, while on the other he fully realizes the price it exacts: abstract isolated individuals or narcissistic personalities unable and unwilling to participate in political life. Thus, he adopts "insurgency" — a fashionable revolutionary term at the time of his writing, but redefined to mean nothing more than a garden variety of participatory democracy — in order to counter the nefarious effects of the welfare state. But how can cretinized individuals made increasingly more psychologically and economically dependant on

4. Walzer, p. 12.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

6. This Marxist residue, however, is not profitably used when it is needed the most. Thus, in an unguarded moment, Walzer confesses (p. 5) that for years he thought that racism, sexism, etc., were inherent in the capitalist system and could be eliminated only with the abolition of capitalism. It is as if Marx and Engels wrote in vain those memorable passages in the *Manifesto* about the civilizing function of capitalism.

7. See John Alt, "Beyond Class: The Decline of Labor and Leisure," *Telos* 28 (Summer 1976), pp. 55-80; Frank Hearn, "Toward a Critical Theory of Play," *Telos* 30 (Winter 1976-77), pp. 145-160; David Noble, *America by Design: Science, Technology and the Rise of Corporate Capitalism* (New York, 1977); Stuart Ewen, *Captains of Consciousness: Advertising and the Social Roots of Consumer Culture* (New York, 1976); William Leiss, *The Limits of Satisfaction: An Essay on the Problem of Needs and Commodities* (Toronto, 1976). The list could go on.

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that state, be expected to mount a successful challenge to it? How can they build and sustain the kinds of voluntary associations that liberals and Walzer so unreservedly cherish when these associations presuppose precisely the autonomous individuality that the welfare state erodes? In such a losing battle, Walzer's insurgency gives way to manipulative politics when the desired spontaneity fails and has to be subsidized from above in order to retain even a semblance of effectiveness.[8] Thus, the uncritical acceptance of the welfare state[9] ultimately tends to turn efforts toward democratization into their exact opposite: the rise of the intelligentsia as a managerial elite.[10]

Walzer is vaguely aware of this unenviable predicament. While "welfare politics remains the most important politics today,"[11] he also thinks it is important to reconstitute communities — even parishes — and civil society in general to provide a balance to the all-powerful welfare state. At the same time, however, Left politics are so defined that any such reconstitutions tend to fall outside their formal limits. Walzer's "working principle of democratic socialism: that politics can be opened up, rates of participation significantly increased, decision-making really shared, without a full-scale attack on private life and liberal values, without a religious revival or a cultural revolution,"[12] makes it impossible to say or do anything meaningful about this other crucial dimension without which the bureaucratic road would have no alternatives. The reintroduction of the radical split between the public and the private — especially after the shock of the Gulag has had its full impact — reduces Left politics to a slightly modified version of its liberal counterpart. The only visible difference is the mere extension of political democratic principles into economics. Aside from the fact that the Gulag may very well begin with the politicization of economics, i.e., with the domination of the formal over the substantive (although, in a situation where economics has already fully penetrated politics, the impact is negligible), this outlook leads to political impotence. And this explains why *Dissent* never had any significant following within the New Left in a situation where it would have otherwise seemed to be a natural inspiration.

The problem is roughly this: the New Left, notwithstanding all the shortcomings and internal contradictions Walzer never tires to justly criticize, sought a qualitative

8. While Sartre's ontologization of this historically specific logic into an ineliminable existential predicament in the *Critique of Dialectical Reason* rules out any long-term solution, to historicize it without an analysis of its genesis creates even more serious problems. Lacking a vision of how to dismantle what generates this dilemma, Walzer's lame advocacy of "socialist" politics turns into a perpetual loser's perspective — an empty moralism with no possibility of implementation.

9. In a hastily added postscript to the essay on the welfare state (pp. 52-53), Walzer apologizes for not having dealt with Habermas' "complex and sometimes hard to follow" argument for a legitimation crisis. Yet, he concedes nothing: at present there is no serious proposal for replacing the welfare state and it is unlikely that it is undergoing a legitimation crisis. Nothing is said, however, about the "motivational" and "rationality" crises Habermas discusses — crises that undermine the possibility of further extentions of or the smooth functioning of the technocratic welfare state — and, one might add, democratization from below.

10. Walzer, of course, rejects Konrad and Szelenyi's and Gouldner's new class theory, insisting on seeing the United States as essentially a capitalist society (pp. 224-233). Nothing in his argument, however, denies that bureaucrats and professionals are becoming increasingly powerful. Although not a class in the traditional sense, bureaucrats and professionals become the shock troops of the technocratic welfare state where their growing indispensability is inversely related to possibilities for democratization.

11. Walzer, *op.cit.*, p. 185.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 70.

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alternative to that "American way of life" that *Dissent* ideology has methodologically avoided questioning. Such a challenge involves first and foremost the unity of politics and ethics, the private and the public. Unaware of the totalitarian implications of this challenge, the New Left first stumbled into the worst forms of Marxism-Leninism and then, disillusioned, went on a "pastoral retreat" — to use Walzer's term— to democratize local institutions and particularize politics. While this can be seen as "both a surrender of millenarian politics and a stubborn recommitment to the Good Old Cause," such an interpretation simply extends that *Dissent* analysis which always fell short of a *radical* critique and was therefore summarily dimissed throughout the turmoil of the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Burned by Stalinism, the reformist Left naturally sought to fend off totalitarianism by retreating to a liberal formalism dividing ethics and politics, which is not only philosophically untenable but also ultimately unsuccessful in carrying out the impossible task of achieving collective emancipation while safeguarding particularity and autonomy. The liberal formalism is philosophically untenable in that its foundations are axiological, thus ruling out other competing alternatives. It is also impossible to realize since it cannot guarantee collective emancipation without restructuring individuality and particularity.[13]

But alternatives to liberal formalism have tended to lead to totalitarian solutions immensely more undesirable, thus necessitating a retreat to it without, however, any kind of philosophical foundation. Thus, socialists today are altogether ambiguous about individuality. Is the individual the abstract monadic entity of bourgeois political theory whose concrete side remains private, hidden from view and enmeshed in religion and tradition? Or is it Marx's social individual whose particularity should also express a new universality (the communist version of Hegel's concrete universal), thus ruling out the structural inequalities resulting from the objectification of the private in the public domain within that economic equivalent of the pineal gland of bourgeois political theory — the marketplace? In the first case ethics become *in principle* separate from politics, while in the second the two necessarily merge. *Tertium non datur* — unless, of course, the private dimension of bourgeois individuality has been fully penetrated by the predominant requirements of advanced capitalism inculcated by the culture industry, and the Marxist social individuality has become ideologically instrumentalized within a bureaucratic collectivism using emancipatory theory to conceal exploitation as never before. When neither Adam Smith's nor Lucien Goldmann's [14] solutions are any longer feasible, a compromise is unavoidable. The

13. It cannot be emphasized strongly enough that millenarian visions or emancipatory projects should only be successfully deployed through persuasion, discussion and criticism — especially in light of the millions of corpses left in the wake of earlier efforts to forcibly impose such projects. But there is absolutely nothing to guarantee this other than an ethical and political commitment to respect others and recognize their right to be wrong and to sin. Recycling John Stuart Mill does not help much since individual actions have often collective consequences — hence limitations become occasionally necessary. Here again nothing but the most formal rules can be drawn in the abstract with any guarantees against excesses or inadequacy. Risk and contingency cannot be eliminated from political life. Given this existential predicament, it is foolish not to wade into questions of substantive justice or deal with ethical questions because of the totalitarian shock, and remain purely within the procedural or formal domain. The result can only be irrelevance and impotence.

14. Lucien Goldmann, *La Communauté Humaine et l'Univers chez Kant* (Zurich, 1948). The problem with Goldmann's answer to the question of social individuality is not that it was wrong, but abstract in that it did not — and could not — taken into account the concrete political and social obstacles preventing that kind of solution.

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only way to salvage a vision of social individuality while not conceding anything to the new forms of communist oppression entails a defense of liberal pluralism (the split of ethics and politics) as a transitory and tactical political necessity while strategically elaborating possibilities to achieve genuine social individuality where ethics and politics are continuous.

Liberal politics are ultimately based on an Enlightenment atomistic metaphysics that hardly anyone defends (or could defend meaningfully) anymore after the collapse of the Newtonian worldview and the decline of its theoretical otherness — Protestant eschatology. Since liberal pluralism has lost its philosophical foundations and no substitute has yet been successfully elaborated, its defense can only be pragmatic in character and vulnerable to attacks from the very all-encompassing worldviews whose co-existence it otherwise seeks to guarantee. Pragmatic defenses of liberal pluralism by radicals and Marxists can successfully suspend the implications of this predicament — the inescapable unity of ethics and politics — but only tactically, pending the working out of more fundamental questions. The result is a shifting pluralism constantly in need of renegotiating modes of collective co-existence among irreconcilable worldviews. Transcendental or natural-right groundings of monadic individuality turn out to be either unwarranted hypostatizations unable to generate unchallengeable universal adherence, or fideisms whose potential outcomes are the various fundamentalisms and cults. The only real guarantee is a *de facto* balance between a multiplicity of world-views successfully preventing any one of them from becoming overwhelmingly predominant. The theological dimension and its millenarian underside can be prevented from becoming institutionalized, but never eliminated as a foundation for ethics and politics. Auschwitz and the Gulag thus remain ineliminable political extremes that cannot be formally ruled out by arbitrarily limiting politics or dismissing millenarianism. In such a context, *Dissent*'s social democratic phobia for millenarian politics can provide neither a guarantee against totalitarianism nor a political vision substantial enough to generate even the most minimal mass commitment. Thus, *Dissent*'s political asceticism succeeds in precipitating its analysis into substantive irrelevance in the futile effort to formalistically rule out the, in principle, ever-possible totalitarianism outcome.

The bottom line is that the *Dissent* vision is too shell-shocked by Stalinism to allow for any radical principles. Its limited conception of politics rules out all but operational pragmatic principles of collective co-existence — procedural justice[15] Consequently, it can never generate a systematic critique of the present compelling enough to fuel a movement even comparable to the modest dimensions of the New Left. But when all is said and done, Walzer's mostly justified bitching and moaning about the New Left — which goes on for more than 75 pages — are really sour grapes and resentment sparked by its constant rejection of stale *Dissent* politics over the years. At any rate, the dusty back issues of *Dissent* are poor place from which to sift out an historical evaluation of the New Left.

How could *Dissent*'s theoretically shallow and politically dull vision of social democracy ever excite the middle-class students constituting the New Left who already had all that such a vision promised? The extent to which *Dissent*'s idelogy failed to

15. It is not surprising that in a lame critique of the Reagan administration's attempt to differentiate between authoritarianism and totalitarianism, Walzer ends up dismissing all theory in order to reject Cold War ideology. His commendable sympathy for all political victims can be deployed only after condemning all theory rather than by means of a rational confrontation of issues at their proper theoretical level. Cf. *The New Republic*, July 4 and 11, 1981.

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have even a minimal impact on the New Left and the radicalism of the 1960s can be seen by its inability to address the scores of new problems that the welfare state and social democracy generated. In other words, the best that *Dissent* promised, the New Left had already rejected, while seeking something that *Dissent* had not even begun to think about. Thus, while the New Left wanted to dismantle "the American way of life" because of its superficiality, meaninglessness and subordination to the needs of organized capitalism, *Dissent* simply sought to democratize it and extend it to those still excluded from it. While the New Left sought new social conditions to give rise to new men and women with new radical needs independent of the logic of commodity fetishism, *Dissent* focused only on the redistribution of collective alienation and the streamlining of institutional irrationality. The hopeless obsolescence of *Dissent*'s ideology becomes all too evident in Walzer's "theory of revolution" — originally published in *Marxist Perspectives*: another intellectual dinosaur[16] seeking to market as academically viable the same old Left wares about collective ownership, central planning and proletarian class rule.

It takes Walzer 22 pages to reiterate the tired explanation that socialist revolutions have failed because of the backwardness of the people in the countries in which they have taken place. Ergo, the traditional revolutionary account, but this time *sans* vanguard, "is still an imaginable process."[17] Imaginable, maybe; possible, no. It remains imaginable only among those who have no imagination left and are still caught entirely within the logic of the given. Socialist revolutions have failed because they presuppose a highly problematic notion of collective consciousness never fully spelled out in theory. Consequently, attempts to realize it in practice result in the dictatorship over needs[18] at best, the Gulag at worst. Efforts to have socialism without collective consciousness, on the other hand, result in an inefficient welfare state constraining individual freedom and bureaucratically dulling social life. No wonder in Europe social democracy is voted in only during severe economic crises and immediately voted out at the first chancel Problems of ecology, personal salvation, relations with nature and fellow human beings, sociality, etc., are systematically bypassed as falling outside *Dissent's* narrowly defined political arena. All is flattened out to the "restructuring of hierarchies in our everyday life"[19] and the redistribution of austerity. This is not enough to make the Left a viable political force and partly explains its irrelevance and decline.

Internationally, the situation is not significantly better. The Left's theoretical exhaustion is evident in the effort to relaunch the old *Praxis* as *Praxis International* from the United States and England, but without any current Yugoslav institutional roots. Of course, the *Praxis* story is well known.[20] As the most successful and sustained effort by Eastern European intellectuals to develop a critical humanist Marxism "from within" (because of the more favorable political climate in Yugoslavia), *Praxis* outlasted and had a much greater impact than Havemann and later Bahro in East Germany, the Budapest School in Hungary, Kosik and Patocka in Czechoslavakia, or the various dissidents in Poland. But ultimately it failed, too, in the face of a regime that, no matter how liberal in comparison to other Eastern European countries, cannot tolerate internal opposition and, in the absence of formal constitutional

16. Cf. my "*Marxist Perspectives* (1978-1981)," *Telos* 47 (Spring 1981), pp. 183-189.
17. Walzer, *op.cit.*, p. 223.
18. Cf. Ferenc Feher, "The Dictatorship over Needs," *Telos* 35 (Spring 1978), pp. 31-42.
19. Walzer, *op.cit.*, p. 299.
20. Cf. Gerson S. Sher, *Praxis: Marxist Criticism and Dissent in Socialist Yugoslavia* (Bloomington, Ind., 1977).

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guarantees and strong bourgeois traditions, can readily deploy state repression and harassment. Thus, after articulating some of the most important issues of Marxist theory and providing the best international forum yet for Left intellectuals, the journal was forced to close down after a few years.[21] The reappearance of its international sequel is obviously welcome but fraught with even more serious problems — theoretical as well as political — than confronted it originally.

While in the early 1960s it was not inconceivable to think about reforming "socialist"regimes from within — especially in view of Yugoslavia's efforts to chart a third course between East and West — in the 1980s, after the Czech experience and the unfolding Polish events, the picture has grown considerably more complex. Central planning is under fire everywhere, the possibility of guaranteeing democratic principles in the absence of private property is in doubt, and socialism as such is no longer as unproblematic in the eyes of Left intellectuals as it once was. Thus, *Praxis International* in its opening statement pledges continuity with the old *Praxis* program while attempting to broaden its political horizon to better fit new international realities. It calls for a "profound transformation of social institutions and individual lifestyles" and seeks to develop an international theoretical community to provide "a comprehensive understanding of our contemporary conditions." The preliminary results, judging from the first issue, however, are not encouraging.

Given the need to emphasize continuity, it is not surprising that the lead article attempts to re-establish a distance from any form of Stalinism while reaffirming a commitment to democracy. But how many of the new *Praxis International* readers need be reminded of this? Written by a *Dissent* regular, Michael Harrington, the lead article does not even begin to confront fundamental problems of alienation, the relation of private property to individual rights, economic organization and democratic decision-making, as well as all major issues facing Marxism and democracy. Stringing out a series of quotations from the classics in the worst scholastic fashion does not contribute anything to elaborating, for example, the relation between central planning, decentralized decision-making, and efficiency. What happens to long-range development when profits are "democratically" distributed? What workers will sacrifice immediate or relatively immediate gratification for industrial development bearing fruits in subsequent generations? One can learn more about these problems by reading any page of the last chapter of Keynes' *General Theory* than all of Harrington's article. Democracy may be the *sine qua non* of socialism, but Harrington does not make a convincing case for it nor does he succeed in providing a vision of social democracy any less bland, dull, and vacuous than Walzer's.

Markovic's "New Forms of Democracy in Socialism" is considerably more interesting as an anti-party and anti-state vindication of the worker's councils, but is neither original nor well thought out. In terms of originality, it does not go much beyond, for example, Korsch's old (early 1920s) and clearly forgotten *Schriften zur Sozialisierung* or *Arbeitsrecht für Betriebsräte*, and ultimately seeks to combine Western parliamentary democracy and workers' councils. In terms of general structure, it is not clear how this account, with the exception of the authoritarian control element and the workers' councils foundation, differs from Manoïlesco's or Bottai's corporatist visions in the 1930s.[22] Furthermore, Markovic does not tackle questions dealing with

21. Cf. "Re-Stalinization in Yugoslavia?" *Telos* 47 (Spring 1981), pp. 214-217.

22. For a discussion of corporatist solutions, see Philippe Schmitter, "Still a Century of Corporatism?" *The Review of Politics*, 36:1 (January 1974), pp. 85-131.

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issues such as "capitalist" technology, i.e., the designing of the productive process in such a way as to rule out in principle democratic forms of management. The result is an interesting ideological statement of intent, but with minimal import for a meaningful new vision of socialism

Heller's "The Moral Maxims of Politics" is even more puzzling. After years of working in Marxist theory, she finally discovers the American political system and, through weak Kantian categories, recycles its caricature — as well as the separation of ethics and politics — as the latest in socialist theory. Clearly, Heller wants to avoid the totalitarian implications of bureaucratic collectivist collapses of ethics and politics, and the instrumentalization of the former to legitimate the latter. But instead of providing merely a pragmatic defense, she attempts to develop an ontological one which inevitably falls back on pre-Marxist Kantian assumptions. Even if defensible, this account remains entirely within traditional bourgeois political thought and is thus wholly incompatible with Marxist social theory.[23] It is not immediately obvious, therefore, what this piece is doing in a journal proposing to re-launch humanist Marxism. The same thing is true of Gould's "Socialism and Democracy." Problems of exploitation, alienation, domination of nature, etc., are not even mentioned in an article which, at best, successfully combines John Stuart Mill and Will Rogers. In both Heller's and Gould's accounts, obsession with the democratization of socialism results in its being phased out of the analysis altogether in favor of a "Brand X" version of American constitutionalism. Only with Tadic's "Socialismus und Emanzipation" is one reminded that socalism has anything to do with the overcoming of alienation. But Tadic too fades into the mysticism of workers' councils after rejecting market socialism, so that the discussion, once again, does not get beyond the levels achieved in Germany in the early 1920s and in Yugoslavia in the early 1960s.

The issue is rounded off with an interesting piece by Löwy where, in six short pages, he shows how Luxemburg had developed the same kind of theory of revolution that Walzer clumsily took 22 pages to reinvent; Habermas and Bernstein provide short tributes to Marcuse; and Boris Weil, a Russian dissident, traces out some of the dissidents' struggles on the Soviet Union.

The picture that emerges is a disappointing one. The rediscovery of what most radicals thought had been long ago abandoned ("bourgeois" political theory) is the only original contribution to the old and still undeveloped theme of workers' councils. One cannot fail to sense the poverty of socialist thought that tries badly to hide behind injections of democracy at every turn. It is as if the socialist Emperor suddenly found out that he has no clothes — hence, he tries to import American jeans to meet the emergency. This type of maneuver, however, will not make *Praxis International* a best-seller among Western scholars who have been weaned on precisely the kind of political theory now being enthusiastically appropriated by disenchanted socialist intellectuals unwilling to dump socialism entirely.

After examining both of these documents, one thing stands out clearly: the task of rethinking radical politics is still on the agenda.

23. Heller's position recycles those taken by Austro-Marxists over half a century ago and effectively shot down by Marcuse as bourgeois and non-Marxist. Cf. Herbert Marcuse, "Transzendentaler Marxismus?" *Die Gesellschaft*, VII—II (1930), pp. 304-326.

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RECENT HEGEL LITERATURE: THE JENA PERIOD AND THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF SPIRIT*

by James Schmidt

Hegel arrived in Jena early in 1801, freed from his tutorial duties by the inheritance he received upon the death of his father. There he aided Schelling in the editing of the *Critical Journal of Philosophy*, won a post at the university, published a series of long articles in the *Journal* and accumulated a pile of lecture notes which have seen the light of day only in our century. He departed from the town rather hastily in 1807 leaving behind a university closed as a result of Napoleon's victory over the forces of the Holy Roman Empire and a book, the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, finished on the eve of the battle.

It would seem easier to make sense out of Hegel's activities in this period than to come to grips with his writings from the Berne and Frankfurt periods. There he was embarked on a project whose outlines are obscure and whose intent is difficult to recapture. At Jena he had become a systematic philosopher. From Frankfurt we have but two pages of what seems to be a comprehensive philosophical system. From Jena we have what will amount to four volumes of system drafts and lecture notes. In his early period his writing is couched in an odd combination of Tübingen theology, critical philosophy, and moral psychology. In Jena, post-Kantian philosophy wins out. However clumsy the writings seem, at least the sources for the terms are known: Schelling, Fichte, and Kant. And above all, the early period ends with a whimper; his theologico-political treatise is never brought to a coherent conclusion. Jena ends with Napoleon and a book. Rarely has any period in a thinker's life had such a clearly drawn conclusion.

Matters of course are not as they seem, and difficulties cannot be escaped. First of all there is the problem of that book. Hegel's attempt to hold out a ladder by which one may ascend from ordinary knowledge to the Absolute results in a more difficult climb than his benign metaphor suggests. The ladder sets one off on a rougher trail, which in turn leads to rock faces, glaciers, sudden storms, and the bleached bones of quite a few unwary climbers who made the ascent not knowing what they would find in the higher elevations. Early ascents seemed to assume that if one could find one clear motif — for Kojève, the dialectic of master and slave, for Wahl, the unhappy consciousness, for Heidegger, the discussion of knowledge in the Introduction of the book, for Lukacs, the discussion of the self-estranged spirit — a safe path to the Absolute might be beaten with a minimum of difficulties. The less than successful results of these efforts have not seemed to disuade a few contemporary authors that indeed this *is*, as advertised, a propaedeutic and that one can make the climb with little advanced preparation. The results in the last ten years have been a few more bodies on the higher elevations.

In part the problem may lie in the second apparent advantage the Jena writings have over the writings of Hegel's theological period. The languages spoken here are recognizable easily enough, but Hegel's pidgin isn't. Within the *System der Sittlichkeit*, for instance, Hegel moves from a set of terms derived from Schelling ("*Potenz,*"

*This is the second of three article-length reviews of recent Hegel literature.

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"Indifference") to some terms which may or may not be of Kantian origin ("Reflection" being one of the most problematic), to something which sounds for all the world like the "real" Hegel (periodic cameos by *"Aufhebung"*). But perhaps the greatest problem lies with all of those carefully preserved *Systementwürfe* which span volumes 6-8 of the new critical edition [1] (with Volume 5 on the way); the pidgin which makes little sense in a given period becomes absolutely bewildering if traced over time. It is not even enough that from the earliest hints of the "Jena System" (the 1802 *System der Sittlichkeit*) to the 1807 *Phenomenology* we have a constant mutation of terminology and organization from system to system; within the 1803-1804 *System der Speculativen Philosophie*, we have a text which is literally a palimpsest. A rewriting and expansion of lectures delivered at Jena, the system draft consists of a series of fragments which represent a number of different levels of reworking. Düsing and Kimmerle, whose edition is the first to give a faithful representation of the actual state of the manuscripts, have employed as a basic text a series of sheets on which a three to four centimeter margin is filled with a fragmentary précis of what appears to be a still more basic text (now lost), a précis which served as the basis for a further expansion. As Kimmerle has noted in his own study of Hegel's system of philosophy in this period, if the marginal notes are still within the identity philosophy he worked out in tandem with Schelling, the expansions and reworkings already point towards the later Hegel.[2] In short, upon closer examination one finds that there is no Jena System, but only a set of fragmentary drafts of *systems*, a point which holds true for "Hegel's System" as a whole.

If the problems we face in coming to terms with Hegel's *Phenomenology* and the works which preceed it are considerable, we can at least take heart in the fact that we are finally in a reasonable position to know *what* the problems are and can feel some measure of certainty about the adequacy of the resources which we have available in confronting these issues. This is the period for which we have by far the most adequate editions of Hegel's work, thanks to the work of Otto Pöggeler and his collaborators at the *Hegel Archiv* in Bochum. Volume 4 of the *Gesammelte Werke*, available since 1968, provides a critical edition of the *published* works from this period: the articles from the *Critical Journal of Philosophy* and Hegel's first acknowledged published work, the monograph from 1801, *The Difference Between Fichte's and Schelling's System of Philosophy*. Volume 6 contains, as previously mentioned, the extant portions of the 1803-1804 *System of Speculative Philosophy* (a philosophy of nature and a philosophy of spirit), Volume 7 contains the *Logic, Metaphysics and Philosophy of Nature* from the 1804-1805 lecture cycle, while Volume 8 contains the *Philosophy of Nature* and *Philosophy of Spirit* from 1805-1806. Volume 5 will contain the *System der Sittlichkeit* of 1802 and some previously unpublished manuscripts from 1801, used by Rosenkranz in his 1844 biography, but only recently recovered. The import of these editions lies not only in their bringing some new material before the public for the first time (in Volume 5) but also in their being the first critical editions of the later sections of the Jena writings, texts which have been available since Hoffmeister's editions of the 1930s but which were prepared by him in a way which often did considerable violence to the

1. Hegel, *Gesammelte Werke Band 6: Jenaer Systementwürfe I*, ed. Klaus Düsing and Heinz Kimmerle (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1975); *Gesammelte Werke Band 7: Jenaer Systementwürfe II*, ed. Rolf-Peter Horstmann and Johann Heinrich Trede (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1971); *Gesammelte Werke Band 8: Jenaer Systementwürfe III*, ed. Johann Heinrich Trede and Rolf-Peter Horstmann (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1976).

2. K. Düsing and H. Kimmerle, "Editorischer Bericht," *Gesammelte Werke*, vol. 7, pp. 340-357; Kimmerle, *Das Problem der Abgeschlossenheit des Denkens. Hegel-Studien Beiheft*, vol. 8 (Bonn, 1970), pp. 248-264.

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original manuscripts. Indeed, in the case of the *Logic, Metaphysics* and *Philosophy of Nature* contained now in Volume 7, Hoffmeister erroneously dated the work as *preceeding* the materials now contained in Volume 6, thus giving rise to the misinterpretation (shared by Lukacs, Marcuse, Plant and others) that this work in some way forms the foundation for both of the lecture cycles, and setting off a good deal of fruitless speculation as to how Hegel could descend from the conceptual sophistication of the logic to embrace a more straightforward Schelling-type approach in the writings from 1802-1804. It is also a period in which readers restricted to English translations have recently been very well served. What is most likely to draw attention here is the long-awaited new translation of the *Phenomenology*.[3] For years those struggling through Baillie's translation could blame the translation for the difficulties of the text and console themselves with the illusion that it all must be easier in the original. A.V. Miller's translation, though not always as resourceful or as consistent as those portions of the Kenley Dove translation which have been published or privately circulated, avoids the Victorian gear-grinding that marked too many of the passages in Baille's rendering and provides a text in which one may be reasonably certain that the difficulties and obscurities one faces are those of the original. At times one may quibble with Miller's choice of terms — the use of "Notion" for "*Begriff*" instead of the more literal "Concept" is one of the more annoying since it requires either the use of the horrendous "notional" rather than the more sensible "conceptual" in the frequent adjectival uses of the term, or breaking the consistency of the translation and hiding the fact that "Notion" and "conceptual" are kindred terms. One may also regret the failure to provide an adequate footnote apparatus to alert readers with some knowledge of German what in fact is going on in the book, but perhaps such a procedure would be overly fussy in a translation whose greatest virtue is the directness and lucidity with which it presents its message.

T.M. Knox's translation of the long essay from the *Critical Journal of Philosophy* on *Natural Law* of 1802-1803 is even more impressive.[4] The difficulties of the work in German are legendary, and are matched only by the *System der Sittlichkeit*. Knox has provided a remarkably readable and, for the most part, accurate translation — muddy where Hegel is muddy, precise when he, in his own way, is precise. Notes from the *Gesammelte Werke* version have been incorporated and provide the reader with some notion of what passages in Kant, Fichte and others Hegel is in fact making reference to in this rather tightly argued attack on Kantian and Fichtian approaches to social contract theories. The one sour note of Knox's translation is a swipe (49) at Manfred Riedel's extraordinarily helpful essay *"Hegels Kritik des Naturrechts,"*[5] a study of the transformation in Hegel's practical philosophy during the Jena period which points up quite lucidly the methodological gulf which separates this essay of 1802 from the later *Rechtsphilosophie*. Indeed, one can only feel regret that Riedel's essay was not translated for use as an introduction to this edition. While the late H.B. Acton provides a helpful summary of the argument and explains at least some of the theoretical background in the writings of Kant and Fichte which is needed to come to terms with the argument, his introduction is rather unhelpful when Hegel plunges headlong into the terminology which he had taken over from Schelling and begun to reformulate.

3. *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A.V. Miller with analysis of the text and foreword by J.N. Findlay (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977).

4. G.W.F. Hegel, *Natural Law*, trans. T.M. Knox; introduction by H.B. Acton (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1975).

5. *Hegel-Studien*, vol. 4, 1967, pp. 177-204. Reprinted in Manfred Riedel, *Studien zu Hegels Rechtsphilosophie* (Frankfurt, 1969).

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Knox has also translated with Harris the companion piece to the *Natural Law* essay, the 1802 *System der Sittlichkeit*.[6] Much of the deeper content of the *Natural Law* essay, most especially the model of the ethical whole which Hegel begins to outline in the final part of the essay, is simply gibberish without some knowledge of the theoretical framework in which Hegel's reflections on natural law must be placed. But the framework is hardly clearer than the worst moments of the essay itself. There are few works in which one can become so totally lost as the *System der Sittlichkeit*. Being apparently only a fragment of a larger system and thus starting in mid-stream with a terminology which is totally unfamiliar, the essay contains some of Hegel's most detailed reflections on political and social thought before the *Philosophy of Right*. Knox and Harris have produced a translation to which even those who are familiar with the German text will have to turn. Carefully rendered, abundantly noted and provided with a superb index, the volume is prefaced by a lengthy interpretation of the essay by Harris. At first glance ninety-eight pages may seem a remarkable act of self-indulgence on the part of the editor and translator. But it is only those who have not tried their sanity against this most cryptic of essays who will begrudge Harris his offer of help.

Harris has a clear sense of what one needs to know to make sense out of Hegel's argument and has not shirked from providing it. Beginning with a discussion of the state of the Hegel-Schelling "identity philosophy" at the time of the writing of the *System der Sittlichkeit*, Harris provides an elucidation of the difficult terminology the work employs and the not always clarified presuppositions upon which the work rests. While the *System der Sittlichkeit* is hardly unfamiliar, having been discussed by Marcuse, Plant, Lukacs, and Avineri in their studies of Hegel's political writings, Harris is one of the first commentators in English to go beyond the by now rather tiring game of picking out those passages where Hegel "anticipates" Marx and actually try to make sense out of what Hegel is saying on his own terms. The central point of the interpretation lies in demonstrating the significance which such notions as "*Potenz*" and "Indifference Points" have within Hegel and Schelling's identity philosophy, thus elucidating the structure on which the three parts of the manuscript hang. To turn the *System der Sittlichkeit* into either an anticipation of Marx or a dry run for Hegel's own *Philosophy of Right* is to misunderstand the radically different methodological and ontological basis on which it rested. Here we do not have a dialectical progression of the sort which one meets in the *Philosophy of Right*; we do not have a series of forms in which a concept (in the case of the *Philosophy of Right*, "will") manifests itself until it at last finds an adequate form. Rather, the organization of the *System der Sittlichkeit* is curiously static, *Potenzen* representing those "levels" on which a Spinozistic whole reproduces itself without ever dividing or parcelling itself out, while "Indifference Points" represent the moments at which a sort of balance is obtained between a fluctuation of alternatives which still owes more to Kant's antinomies than to Hegel's dialectic.

Harris' translation of the first Jena *Philosophy of Spirit*, the last third of the manuscript contained in Volume VI of the *Gesammelte Werke*, is of a similarly high quality, although here the decision has been made not to try to duplicate the accuracy (and hence ambiguity) of the critical edition but rather to produce a more readable text that Harris flatly terms "An Interpretation." Some questions may be raised as to why Harris, if interested in producing a more coherent text, did not turn to translating the *second* Jena *Philosophy of Spirit* (1805-1806), which is a good deal more coherent,

6. G.W.F. Hegel, *System of Ethical Life (1802-03) and First Philosophy of Spirit (1803-04)*, ed. and trans. by H.S. Harris and T.M. Knox (Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1979).

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worked out, and, when all is said, probably a more compelling presentation of Hegel's views on politics and society.[7] The ultimate value of the first *Philosophy of Spirit* may lie in its very incoherence: it betrays the titanic struggle in which Hegel was engaged as he began to realize that there was a different and in many ways simpler manner in which he could present his argument, a manner that ran against the organizing principles of identity philosophy.

Less needs to be said about Harris' collaboration with Walter Cerf on two translations of earlier published works: the so-called "Difference" essay (life is much too short to trott out its full title) and the long 1802 article from the *Critical Journal*, "Faith and Knowledge."[8] Both are significant works, throwing a good deal of light on Hegel's first embracing and further elaboration of Schelling's standpoint. The former, perhaps best known for its powerful introductory section on the "Need of Philosophy" — Hegel's earliest reflection on the relation between philosophy and the cultural milieu in which it appears — includes Hegel's most concise elaboration of what *he* takes to be the basic achievement of Schelling's system, which, if not the point of departure for his own philosophy, is at least the philosophical system closest to him at the start of his intellectual journey. "Faith and Knowledge" pushes the criticism of Kant and Fichte first posed in the "Difference" essay even further and sets the stage for the resolution of the breach between philosophical knowledge and religious faith that is one of the primary motifs of the *Phenomenology*. Both essays provide us, then, with an insight into the first steps Hegel took in displacing his theologico-politico project onto the domain of systematic philosophy.

One can find a link between the Jena writings and what lay before simply because Hegel drew it for us. In September of 1800 — shortly before writing Schelling that well-known letter in which he announces that, having been forced to cast the ideal of his youth in the form of a systematic philosophy, he is now wondering how it is possible to return to an intervention in the lives of men — Hegel wrote a new introduction to the abandoned "Positivity" essay. In addition to suggesting a new definition of positivity that now encompasses Kant as well as Storr, Hegel notes that it is "obvious" that an examination of the way in which the relation between God and man has been posed within the evolution of Christianity "cannot be thoughtfully and thoroughly pursued without becoming in the end a metaphysical treatment of the relation between the finite and the infinite." Somewhat hastily he assures the reader, "But that is not the aim of this essay. . . .,"[9] but it is assuredly a problem which occupies pride of place six months later in the "Difference" essay. There, in his discussion of the way in which reflection has become the main instrument of contemporary philosophizing, we find the philosophical rewrite of the problem that had been plaguing him in Frankfurt: all philosophies that rely on reflection in their effort to reach the absolute become ensnarled in a set of contradictions that force the reflective intellect (*Verstand*) either to supplement continually its limited truths to encompass more and more of a reality that is grasped only as an infinite task, or to attempt a reflective apprehension of this infinite task, which immediately results in the fixing of the opposition of finite and infinite in a way

7. A translation of this text, undertaken by Leo Rauch, will be published by Yale University Press.

8. G.W.F. Hegel, *The Difference Between Fichte's and Schelling's System of Philosophy*, trans. and ed. by H.S. Harris and Walter Cerf (Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1977); Hegel, *Faith and Knowledge*, trans. and ed. by Walter Cerf and H.S. Harris (Albany, New York: 1977).

9. Hegel, *Werke in Zwanzig Bänden*, ed. E. Moldenhauer and K.M. Michel (Frankfurt, 1971), vol. 1, p. 225 (trans. by T.M. Knox as Hegel, *Early Theological Writings* [Chicago, 1948], p. 176).

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that nullifies the significance of the finite intellect's strivings (*Diff.* 95).

The contradiction into which reflection enters here can best be understood as but one specific case of the more general problem of the way in which philosophy emerges as a result of tensions within a culture. Hegel's discussion of the "Need of Philosophy" in the "Difference" essay thus provides us with both a striking example of the way in which his theologico-politico project was recast and with a means of understanding the *practical* significance he saw in the critique of philosophy that was launched at Jena. Hegel argued that the need for philosophy arose "When the might of union vanishes from the life of men and the antitheses lose their living connection and reciprocity and gain independence" (*Diff.*, 91). The evolution of *Bildung* — culture or education (Harris renders the term consistently as the former and curiously translates *Kultur* as civilization) — takes the form of a constant splitting up of the basic unity of the absolute and a fixing of a given aspect in opposition to the rest of the absolute.[10] The forward evolution of *Bildung* thus has generated such oppositions as "Reason and sensibility, intelligence and nature and. . . absolute subjectivity and absolute objectivity" (*Diff.*, 90). With the advance of *Bildung* the power of dichotomy becomes ever stronger, and in the present age takes its ultimate form with the turning of *Verstand* against *Vernunft* and the subsequent enthroning of reflective *Verstand* as reason itself (*Diff.*, 92). Hence, Hegel argues that to talk of "grounding" or of finding bases for philosophy *within* philosophy itself (the program demanded by Reinhold, that bit of "contemporary flotsam in time's stream" who serves as the point of departure for Hegel's reflections) is to be confused both about the very possibility of providing some sort of *Grundsatz* within a philosophical system (*Diff.*, 103-106) and to ignore the fact that the process of "founding and grounding gets going before, and outside, of philosophy" in the diremptions brought about by the process of *Bildung* itself (*Diff.*, 93-94).

Thus, if we are to speak of "presuppositions" for philosophy, they must be posed in terms of "the need which has come to utterance" and are two-fold: (1) that the goal sought by philosophy, the Absolute itself, must already be present, since otherwise it would not be sought, and (2) that consciousness "has stepped out of the totality" and thus provides us with a point of access to the Absolute. In Hegel's metaphor, which returns in various guises throughout the Jena period, 'The Absolute is night, and the light is younger than it. . . ." (*Diff.*, 93). Common human understanding grasps only this second aspect, and although on the level of "feeling" it still contains an intimation of the Absolute, it remains a process in which single items are isolated which, like "points of light that arise out of the night of totality," serve as guides for everyday activities (*Diff.*, 98-100). Faith, in contrast, grasps the Absolute but in the process nullifies consciousness (*Diff.*, 100). It represents a problematic attempt to restore some measure of unity to the various dichotomies unfolded by *Bildung*, but at the price of extinguishing the intellect itself. In the words of the Preface to the "Difference" essay, in which Hegel is already glancing at the theme of "Faith and Knowledge," phenomena such as Schleiermacher's *Speeches on Religion* represent the "need for a philosophy that will recompense nature for the mishandling that it suffered in Kant and Fichte's systems" (*Diff.*, 83).

The task of speculation, then, is to construct "conscious identity out of what, in the consciousness of the ordinary intellect, are necessary opposites" and thus provide a synthesis which is an "abomination to faith" (*Diff.*, 100). Even as a failed system,

10. The peculiarity of Hegel's use of the term, all too frequently overlooked in discussions which import the meaning the term had for writers such as Herder or von Humboldt into a reading of Hegel, has been pointed out by Rüdiger Bubner, "Problemgeschichte und Systematischer Sinn der 'Phänomenologie' Hegels" now in Bubner, *Dialektik und Wissenschaft* (Frankfurt, 1973), pp. 15-16.

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speculation at least serves to heighten the dichotomies of *Bildung* and thus to bring them more forcefully to the fore *as dichotomies* in need of unification (*Diff.*, 102). The goal, then, is to unite what *Bildung* and a "culture of reflection" have divided, and in this task one cannot proceed by means of reflection, which has as its result only the elaboration of a manifold of particulars in opposition to one another and to the Absolute. Rather, "philosophy must aim to posit this manifold as internally connected, and there necessarily arises the need to produce a totality of knowing, a system of science. As a result, the manifold of these connections finally frees itself from contingency: they get their places in the context of the objective totality of knowledge and their objective completeness is accomplished" (*Diff.*, 113). The "metaphysical" reposing of the problem of positivity thus leads us to Hegel's embracing of systematic philosophy.

Having at least some sense of the general motive for Hegel's immersion in the various system drafts of the Jena years, the problem becomes that of ascertaining what sort of system Hegel has opted for. Here we may move to a brief consideration of two interpretations of Hegel's activity during the Jena period, each of which proceeds from a different end of the period and constructs a different reading of what are the aspirations and lacunae of the Jena years. Harris' extensive introductions to the "Difference" essay, "Faith and Knowledge," and the *System der Sittlichkeit* in effect provide us with a 200-page discussion of Hegel's early Jena system which takes its point of departure from the sketch of identity philosophy elaborated at the end of the "Difference" essay. From the other end of the Jena period, Otto Pöggeler has been led into a discussion of the transformations of the Jena years out of an interest in clarifying the motivations for the framing of a "Science of the Experience of Consciousness," subsequently recast as a *Phenomenology of Spirit*.

Of Harris' three introductions, it is the one that prefaces his translation of the "Difference" essay that will bear the greatest scrutiny here, just as he draws heavily on its conclusions in his interpretation of the *System der Sittlichkeit*. In drawing out the implications of Hegel's call for a speculative philosophy that will overcome the limits of reflection by elaborating a coherently interconnected system, Harris relies on the account of Schelling's system that forms the penultimate section of the "Difference" essay. Schelling here is depicted as having found a way around the hypostatization of one aspect of the Absolute that is the cardinal sin of reflection. Unlike Fichte, whose philosophy fails to attain an identity of subject and object and instead is merely the elaboration of a subject-object unity that remains essentially subjective — present in consciousness but not in nature — Schelling's system incorporates both the "subjective subject-object" of Fichte's transcendental philosophy and an "objective subject-object" in the form of a philosophy of nature (Harris, *Diff.* Intro. 41-42; *Diff.* 155-161). Seeking to unravel the dichotomy of freedom and necessity that plagues Fichte's practical philosophy and that is overcome only by posing the overcoming of heteronomy as an "ought," Schelling sought to draw out the implications of Kant's analysis of teleology in the *Critique of Judgment*. But unlike Kant, who posed the notion of a natural end as a regulative idea of knowledge, Schelling interpreted this teleology as *constitutive* (Harris, *System* Intro. 14).

The result of this complementing of transcendental philosophy with a science of nature was a system of philosophy that Hegel elaborates in his discussion of Schelling as follows: transcendental philosophy, or as Hegel prefers to call it, the "science of intelligence," maintains the primacy of subject over nature, while the philosophy of nature maintains the dominance of nature over the subject. To that extent one can denote the former as the sphere of practical philosophy, and the latter as the sphere of

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theoretical philosophy (*Diff.* 168). However, if the matter is pushed further it becomes apparent that since *both* of these sciences are exploring the way in which a subject-object differentiates itself into various domains, *each* science will have both a theoretical and a practical part. Hence, within the philosophy of nature, there is, in Harris' words, "a tension between the theoretical 'construction' of inorganic nature and the practical 'reconstruction of the organism,' " while within practical philosophy there is a similar tension between "the 'construction' of consciousness itself as the capacity for theoretical cognition" on the one hand and "a fully practical part which deals with the transformation of the natural world through the realization of consciousness" (Harris, *Diff.* Intro., 50) on the other.

These two sciences are completed by a third phase of the identity system which sets forth the Absolute shared by the science of intelligence and the science of nature. This takes the form of the so-called "resumption" of the whole in art and religion. To understand the task of this final phase, some of the terminology of the system as a whole must be elaborated. Central to the entire undertaking was the notion of *Potenz*, literally "power" in the sense of mathematical computation. Faced with the question of how an absolute totality can be developed and elaborated into various less-than-Absolute entities without falling into diremption or one-sided reflection, Schelling argued that "since the one being is indivisible, diversity of things is only possible at all, insofar as it is posited as the undivided whole under distinct determinations." These determinations, termed *Potenzen*, "change nothing whatsoever in the essential being, which remains always and necessarily the same. . . ."[11] The absolute point of identity for the system is that "point of indifference" which comprehends all *Potenzen*, and conversely also obtains within each individual *Potenz*. Thus, the construction of the entire system resembles a maddening process of balancing oppositions around null points within both the system as a whole — at the point where art and religion develop an absolute identity — and within the various individual sciences, each of which will be seen as a balance, homologous to the balance of the whole, between freedom and necessity, subject and object, nature and intelligence.

From this follows the often bewildering argument of the *System der Sittlichkeit*. For the present we need only be concerned with the general form of Harris' interpretation since it gives a more specific case of how one of the individual sciences is organized according to the dictates of identity philosophy. Harris argues that the first part of the essay must be viewed as the working out of the movement from "necessity" to "freedom": from feelings embedded in man's material life to the family, the highest community possible within the realm of feeling. The third section of the essay runs in the opposite direction, from an abstract form of contractual unity to a more differentiated, representative political order. At the null point between these two movements is a remarkable section entitled "The Negative or Freedom or Transgression" which runs through the various forms of destruction (from barbaric invasion to the grudging acceptance of an enemy one cannot defeat) which can befall a social order. Corresponding roughly to the final resumption of the system as a whole is a discussion of religion, missing from the manuscript but possible to reconstruct on the basis of Karl Rosenkranz's account, in which many of the themes of the theological writings are posed once again (Harris, *System* Intro. 19-20).[12]

11. Schelling, *Philosophy of Art* quoted in Harris, *Diff.* Introduction, pp. 53-54.

12. Karl Rosenkranz, *Georg Friedrich Wilhelm Hegel's Leben* (1844), Reprint (Darmstadt, 1963), pp. 132-141, trans. in *System of Ethical Life*, pp. 178-186.

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The virtues of Harris' approach to the *System der Sittlichkeit* should be evident. Here at last we have a discussion of it which talks about the structure of the argument itself and not about how much the commentator may be reminded of passages in Marx as he plows through a text which is obviously otherwise unintelligible. Armed with this general way of schematizing Hegel's argument, we can understand why certain themes seem to be repeated in various sections — for instance, the discussion of the labor process is broken up and assigned to a number of different *Potenzen* within the essay. And in those cases when Hegel is less than clear or where the manuscript is clearly lacking elaboration, we can come to some informed guesses about what Hegel was trying to do.

The shortcomings of the interpretation may be less obvious, especially since it is so far above anything that has been ventured in English to date. However, the effort to reconstruct *Hegel's* early system on the basis of his account of *Schelling's* system is not unproblematic. Indeed, an attempt to carry out an argument quite similar to Harris' for the entire period from 1800 to 1804, Heinz Kimmerle's *Das Problem der Abgeschlossenheit des Denkens*, has been severely criticized by Rolf P. Horstmann.[13] A few of Horstmann's points bear repeating since they are also applicable to Harris' interpretation. Horstmann's general argument is that there is no compelling reason to feel that Hegel was doing anything more in the penultimate chapter of the "Difference" essay than the section title suggests: carrying out a "Comparison of Schelling's Principle of Philosophy with Fichte's." While it is doubtless true that Hegel's account of Schelling's system is in many ways a development and elaboration of points which Schelling himself had scarcely worked out, and while it is also true that Hegel's association with Schelling should not be viewed, as it is so often by Lukacs, as a temporary fad which Hegel finally abandoned, there is a difference between the account of Schelling's system which Harris takes as Hegel's own and *other* evidence that exists about Hegel's own system of philosophy.

Horstmann develops two main points against the reading of Hegel's system elaborated by Kimmerle: first, it fails to take note of a *different* account of the nature of the Absolute in a contemporary published writing, the essay on natural law, and second, it cannot account for the curious role played by *Logic* and *Metaphysics* in Hegel's early system. With regard to the first point, Horstmann's case is as follows. Within the *Natural Law* essay one finds a condensed account of the nature of the Absolute and the relation of theoretical and practical sciences to this Absolute, which is "irreconcilable with that brought forth in the 'Difference' essay. . ." (95). Hegel here works from the opposition of unity and multiplicity to show that both categories are dependent on each other and remain in his terminology "ideal," and hence simply different modes in which a unity between unity and multiplicity is posited. From this is developed a schema of *Natur* and *Sittlichkeit*, which *Natural Law* expresses in terms of a distinction between the relation of "indifference" (the condition of mutual nullification) with "relation" (the condition of opposition). Hence, the Absolute is viewed as manifesting itself in one of two forms of appearance: as physical nature, in which one has a unity of indifference and relation in which multiplicity is primary (which Hegel terms a "relative identity") and a unity of indifference and relation in which unity is primary: ethical nature (*Natural Law,* 73). What Horstmann sees as most important about this way of proceeding is that it allows for only two types of

13. R.P. Horstmann, "Probleme der Wandlung in Hegels Jenaer Systemkonzeption," in *Philosophische Rundschau*, 19 (1972), pp. 87-118. Further citations to this essay will be made in the text.

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specialized sciences: a philosophy of nature and a philosophy of *Sittlichkeit*. It does not, in his view, provide the basis or, for that matter, even the need for a third science, a science of the absolute which would "resume" the two sciences at a higher level (96).

Second, Horstmann argues that Kimmerle does not explain adequately the role played by a discipline denoted as "Logic and Metaphysics" in Hegel's early system. In his course announcement for the Summer 1802 session, Hegel speaks of a discipline called *Logicam et Metaphysicam sive systema reflexionis rationis."* Working on the basis of the discussion at the start of the "Difference" essay, we can understand the sense in which Hegel uses the term logic and why he sets it off from the metaphysics only if we divorce all associations with the Nürnberg *Science of Logic* from our minds. In 1802, logic served as an introduction to the entire system. Its task seems to have been to articulate the limitations that reflection encounters and hence, as the "Difference" essay argues, prepare the way for speculative philosophy. Thus Horstmann locates the true innovation of Hegel's early Jena system here, at the very start of the "Difference" essay, rather than in the explanation of Schelling's system. The function of logic was to provide a path that reflection could take until it was ready to enter into speculative philosophy, or in the terminology used here, metaphysics. At that point one could begin from the identity equation which stands at the start of systematic philosophy and then work one's way outward, developing the Philosophy of Nature and the Philosophy of *Sittlichkeit*.

It should be apparent that there is a curious kinship between the *Phenomenology* and this early Logic: both have as their task the raising of naive consciousness to the level where truly philosophical thought can begin, and both begin by exploiting the tendency of reflective thought to fall into an endless series of quandaries which eventually force it to suspend itself. This relationship, sketched by Horstmann in his critique of Kimmerle, has been developed more generally in Otto Pöggeler's 1964 essay, "Hegels Jenaer Systemkonzeption."[14] While the essay has to some extent been supplanted by subsequent, more detailed studies of the period, it still remains one of the more forceful and lucid elaborations of the path that led Hegel to the *Phenomenology*, and its translation into English, like that of most of the other essays in his collection, would be a most welcome event.

In Pöggeler's reading, an attempt to understand the basic motivation for the *Phenomenology* must begin with the "Difference" essay and with that bit of flotsam attacked therein, K.L. Reinhold. Reinhold was, in the early years of the new century, one of the staunchest critics of the line of development of Kantian critical philosophy that led to Fichte and Schelling. He viewed the end result of this development as an unmitigated dogmatism, the elaboration of a system of philosophy that could not escape from the "magic circle" of idealism but which remained trapped within its own eternal self-reproduction, totally oblivious to any reality "outside" the circle. From critical philosophy he turned to C.G. Bardili's *Logic*, and hailed it as the sort of philosophizing that was needed: a methodological attempt to ground the reality of cognition in some sort of fundamental proposition and then, working outward from this, to deduce a comprehensive logical structure that would be grounded in reality.

Hegel, even though he rejected the solution that Reinhold offered and was rather merciless in his treatment of the poor fellow in the "Difference" essay, proved not to take the problem that Reinhold had pointed out quite so cavalierly as the criticism in the "Difference" essay might suggest. Pöggeler argues that as early as the account of

14. Now reprinted in Otto Pöggeler, *Hegels Idee einer Phänomenologie des Geistes* (Freiburg-Munich: Verlag Karl Alber, 1973).

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the "Difference" essay, there are premonitions of the later criticism of Schelling: that Schelling in effect has done no more than to juxtapose mechanically an "objective subject-object" to the subjective subject-object which Fichte had provided. That the juxtaposition was external and not adequately worked out is suggested by the necessity of a post-factum "resumption" of the two systems in the science of the Absolute. Pöggeler concludes, "That Hegel placed a logic and metaphysics at the start of the system is the fundamental critique of Schelling; a lifting up, a systematic unfolding of the speculative, which was not evolved for itself in Schelling's system -- of this need Schelling had no consciousness" (144). Hegel's decisive contribution was thus to bring idealism to consciousness of its own peculiar task: to provide for a systematic elaboration of all its categories (145).

Hegel's subsequent carrying out of this project forced a much more complete break with Schelling than could have been predicted when Hegel first began working out the consequences of this different approach to the Absolute. The first mutation occurs by the time of the *Jena Logic and Metaphysics* of 1804-1805 (*Gesammelte Werke* Vol. 7). It has now become difficult to make a clear differentiation between logic and metaphysics since it has become evident that the entire structure of reflection itself *already* rests on a speculative basis. By 1806 Hegel has dropped the double title to this section of the system and refers to it simply as *Logic*, and logic is now said to begin within the realm of the speculative rather than within reflection. But this move leaves Hegel without a propaedeutic.

To understand how it is that a "Science of the Experience of Consciousness" comes to play this role, we must examine a related series of transformations which occur within the study of *Sittliche Natur* and which eventually forced Hegel to frame an authentic *Philosophie des Geistes*. As early as the *Natural Law* essay and the *System der Sittlichkeit* it is apparent that *sittliche Natur* had one decisive advantage over *physiche Natur*: it was capable of bringing about, through the political order, a form of reality that is adequate to its content in a self-conscious fashion. Unlike nature, which strives to realize itself in the organism through an unconscious teleology, the ethical realm is a realm of self-conscious action. It is for this reason that Harris' reading of the *System der Sittlichkeit* may disguise an important tension. His translation includes Karl Rosenkranz's account of the conclusion of the lectures on *Sittlichkeit* which Hegel offered: here Hegel touches on the themes of folk religion, a constant concern since his Tübingen days. Harris presumes this material would have to be taken up again in the science of the Absolute, thus filling out the Schellingesque scheme of the last part of the "Difference" essay (Harris, *System* Intro. 81-85). But, in the absence of any manuscript materials indicating that Hegel in fact was working on or planned to work on a science of the Absolute, a more interesting conjecture is possible, and has been advanced rather cogently by Horstmann: Why assume that Hegel *ever* intended to frame a science of the Absolute? Having developed the basic speculative principle in his *Metaphysics*, what would be the need for a resumption at the end? And if this is true, could not the concluding portions of the *System der Sittlichkeit* be seen as a working out of the dictum from the *Natural Law* essay that "*Geist* is higher than nature" by showing how it is first within the domain of *Sittlichkeit* that one comes to the elaboration of the Absolute?

There remain some ambiguities to be worked out within the domain of the science of *Sittlichkeit* before it can become, properly speaking, a Philosophy of Spirit. The Jena manuscripts from 1803-1804 should not, in Horstmann's view, be called a Philosophy of Spirit since here *Geist* and consciousness are both introduced as

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determinants of *Sittlichkeit*. We do not yet see an immanent development of absolute *Geist* out of the structure of self-consciousness. This had to await the 1805-1806 cycle where for the first time one sees an embracing of what Hegel was to term in a notebook from the period "Fichte's contribution": "First through the history of consciousness one knows what one has in these abstractions, through the concept. . . ."[15] The structure of consciousness thus provides philosophy with a series of self-moving concepts: we have thus arrived at the decisive principle of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* (Horstmann 110-117).

Present-day commentators have held the *Phenomenology of Spirit* in considerably higher esteem than its first readers or, for that matter, the author himself. The book was scarcely published before he began to criticize it. To Schelling, in the well-known letter of May 1, 1807, he complained that a "wretched confusion" (*unselige Verwirrung*) had infected not only the publishing, printing and distribution of copies, but even the composition of the book itself. "I am curious what you will say about the idea of this first part, which is really an introduction — for I have still not gotten beyond the introducing, *in mediam rem*. — The working out of the details has, I feel, harmed the overview of the whole, which itself, because of its nature, is such an interlacing of hither and thither, that even if it had been better carried out, would still cost me too much time until it stood clearer and more complete." And noting the "greater lack of form" (*grossere Unform*) of the latter parts, he excused himself by reminding Schelling that he "finished the editing around midnight before the Battle of Jena" (*Briefe* I: 161-162). In other letters he expressed hopes that a second edition might enable him to clarify the organization of the book, but when he finally came to prepare a new edition of the work, shortly before his death, he labelled it "A curious early work, not revised — related to the time of its composition — in the Preface: the *abstract Absolute* dominated at the time."[16]

This time-boundness of the work seems to have been conveyed to Hegel's students, who used the term "phenomenology" to denote those systems that remained trapped at the level of "consciousness" with its separation of subject and object and thus did not make the advance to true philosophical speculation. Rosenkranz's biography, while more sympathetic to the work, sealed its fate: it was a product of Hegel's break with Schelling and Fichte and while it did, with the attainment of the concept of *Geist*, provide the appropriate philosophizing subject, it did not, as was the case in the *Logic*, provide a system. Others, such as Rudolph Haym, were more hostile. He viewed it as a mishmash of transcendental philosophy and history that "cannot be what it should be and is not what it wants to be." Of the early commentators on the *Phenomenology* only David Friedrich Strauss took a more tolerant stance, preferring the more open approach of the not-yet *unwiderlegte Weltphilosoph* to the more systematic utterances of the sage of Berlin. It was Strauss' comments that gave Marx his point of entry into the work, and in the context of the book's initial reception, the care that Marx devoted to the critique of the work in the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* is indeed unique.[17]

The confusion prompted by the disorder of the work itself was only compounded by Hegel's subsequent treatment of it. Originally conceived as the first part of a "System of Science" which Hegel hoped to complete over the summer of 1806, some of the first

15. *Werke in Zwanzig Bänden, op.cit.*, vol. 2, p. 559.
16. *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, ed. G. Hoffmeister (Hamburg, 1952), p. 578.
17. For general discussions of the reception of the *Phenomenology* see Pöggeler, pp. 170-188 and the forward to Hans Friedrich Fulda and Dieter Henrich, eds., *Materialien zu Hegels 'Phänomenologie des Geistes'* (Frankfurt, 1976), pp. 14-23.

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editions of the work actually carry the original title page, which reads "System of Science: First Part, the Science of the *Experience* of Consciousness." But while the book was still in the publisher's hands, Hegel changed the title page to read "I. Science of the *Phenomenology* of Spirit," a request that was not carried out in all extant copies of the first edition. Some continued to carry the first title; others carried both.[18] The Preface to the first edition of the *Science of Logic* still claimed that the *Phenomenology* was the first part of the *System of Science,* the *Logic* the second, and the yet-to-be-published two concrete sciences, the *Philosophy of Nature* and the *Philosophy of Spirit*, the completion of the system. But in an 1831 footnote, Hegel stated that this system had now been replaced by the 1817 *Encyclopedia* and announced that in the new edition of the *Phenomenology* the old title, *"System of Science: First Part"* would be dropped.[19] The lectures on the *Philosophy of Religion*, however, still seem to leave an opening for the *Phenomenology* even within the completed *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences.*[20]

The most damning later discussion of the book occurs in the *Encyclopedia* itself, where, in the conclusion of the discussion of the "Preliminary Concept," Hegel explained the confusion inherent in the *Phenomenology* in a way that was to greatly influence subsequent discussions of the work. In distinguishing the method of introducing naive consciousness to philosophy that was undertaken in the *Encyclopedia's* discussion of the three attitudes toward objectivity from that taken in the *Phenomenology* itself, Hegel writes, "In my *Phenomenology of Spirit*... the method adopted was to begin with the first and simplest phase of mind, immediate consciousness, and to show how that stage gradually of necessity worked onward to the philosophical point of view, the necessity of that view being proved by the process. But in these circumstances it was impossible to restrict the quest to the mere form of consciousness. For the stage of philosophical knowledge is the richest in material and organization, and therefore, as it came before us in the shape of a result, it presupposed the existence of the concrete formations of consciousness, such as the individual social morality, art and religion. In the development of consciousness, which at first sight appears limited to the point of form merely, there is thus at the same time included the development of matter or of the objects discussed in the special branches of philosophy."[21] Thus, the propaedeutic task of the *Phenomenology* would seem, in the *Encyclopedia,* to be given over to the introductory discussion of the attitudes towards objectivity, while *Phenomenology* itself, restricted now to a discussion of consciousness, self-consciousness and reason, survives within the *Philosophy of Subjective Spirit* as a science of consciousness which carries out the transition from anthropology, a science which observes spirit while still immersed in nature, to psychology, a discipline that deals with Spirit proper. Hence the feeling that the *Phenomenology* of 1807 was somehow a mishmash of history and transcendental philosophy did not have to wait for Haym to be expressed. On the basis of Hegel's own treatment, one wonders if the work in fact had a coherent structure.

This state of affairs has given rise to a debate over whether there is a fundamental break within the *Phenomenology*, a break that, in Werner Marx's way of posing the problem, would in fact separate the two different titles given to the work by Hegel

18. See the editors' remarks to the edition in the *Werke in Zwanzig Bänden, op.cit.*, vol. 3, pp. 595-596.

19. *Hegel's Science of Logic*, trans. A.V. Miller (London, 1979), p. 29.

20. Hegel, *Begriff der Religion*, ed. G. Lasson (Leipzig, 1925), pp. 184, 171.

21. *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, para. 25 (*Hegel's Logic*, trans. W. Wallace [Oxford, 1975], pp. 45-46).

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(x-xi).[22] On the one hand, we have the authentic "Science of the Experience of Consciousness" running up to and including the discussion of Reason, a science that was later inserted into the *Philosophy of Subjective Spirit*. On the other hand we have a "Phenomenology of Spirit," an ambitious work that seeks to unfold the entire content of the system of philosophy, beginning with naive consciousness, proceeding through the domain of "Objective Spirit" with its discussions of politics and culture, and culminating in an entry into what will subsequently be the triad of "Absolute Spirit": art, religion and philosophy. Read in this way the *Phenomenology* would not simply be an introduction to philosophy which leads one to the door of the *Logic*; rather, the "authentic science of the spirit" with which the *Phenomenology* is claimed to "coincide" is the entire *Philosophy of Spirit* itself.[23]

In the face of the general reputation of the work in modern discussions it is perhaps helpful to begin an examination of the problems of the coherence of the *Phenomenology* with what must be the most blunt statement of the case for the prosecution yet available in English — Michael Petry's introduction to his new edition of the *Philosophy of Subjective Spirit*.[24] The book itself shows the same care that Petry lavished on his edition of the *Philosophy of Nature*. Respect is paid to Hegel's considerable immersion in the empirical sciences of his day by tracing the references, taken from Hegel's unpublished lecture notes, to contemporary works in anthropology and psychology and by explaining what empirical basis Hegel's systematic reconstruction had in the sciences of his own day. Hegel's discussion of anthropology, phenomenology and psychology from the *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences* and the introduction to the entire *Philosophy of Spirit* (in other works, paragraphs 377-482 of the third edition of the *Encyclopedia*) are offered in a new translation with the German text on facing pages. Through the use of bold-faced type, those portions of the text that date from 1827 or 1830 are distinguished from that part of the text that was carried over unchanged from the first edition of 1817. Petry uses the Boumann 1845 edition of the *Encyclopedia* as the basis for the German text, and thus provides a translation of Boumann's *Zusätze*. But his edition goes beyond the Wallace-Miller translation by also translating additional parts of the lecture transcripts from which Boumann drew his *Zusätze*, and by translating Hegel's dictations to his class. Finally, Petry has translated some material which was previously unavailable in any edition: an 1822-1825 reworking of the early sections of the *Philosophy of Spirit*, apparently undertaken by Hegel with the intent of publishing something equivalent to the *Philosophy of Right* with respect to the section of his lectures on subjective spirit, and the complete text of Griesheim's notes on Hegel's 1825 lectures on the *Phenomenology of Spirit*.

Petry's long introduction expresses a heretical preference for the *Encyclopedia's* version of phenomenology over the 1807 *Phenomenology*, and argues that it is within the domain of psychology rather than phenomenology that Hegel made his most important breakthrough. Petry's immersion in the more concrete side of Hegel's

22. Werner Marx, *Hegel's Phenomenology: A Commentary on the Preface and the Introduction*, trans. Peter Heath (New York: Harper & Row, 1975).

23. *Phenomenology*, p. 58; this interpretation was advanced by Otto Pöggeler in a 1961 essay "Zur Deutung der *Phänomenologie des Geistes*" now in *Hegel's Idea . . ., op.cit.*, pp. 211-214. The interpretation has subsequently been revised. See "Hegels Phänomenologie des Selbstbewusstseins" in *ibid.*, pp. 262-263 and "Die Komposition des *Phänomenologie des Geistes*," in Fulda and Henrich, *Materialien . . ., op.cit.*, p. 351.

24. *Hegel's Philosophy of Subjective Spirit*, ed. and trans. with an introduction and explanatory notes by M.J. Petry, 3 volumes (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1978). All citations in the text will be to vol. I: Introductions.

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system stems from his feeling that "By concentrating upon the *Phenomenology*, the *Logic* and what they thought were the general principles of the mature system... the supposedly orthodox exponents of Hegelianism during the 1830s and 1840s laid themselves wide open to the one-sided by incisively constructive criticism of Feuerbach and Marx" (xiii-xiv). If Hegel's reflections on politics are not to be merely a "parenthesis within the *Logic*," then it is not enought ot understand how the structural arrangement of the *Philosophy of Right* corresponds to the *Logic*. Rather, one must see how the category of will, so crucial to all of the subsequent *Philosophy of Spirit*, is first elaborated within the psychology (xxi-xxii, xliv-xlvi).

Petry is considerably less enthusiastic about the *Phenomenology*. To use it as an introduction for students to the system as a whole is "to run the risk of their never finding a way out of the subject-object problems raised, it being so much easier to fossick around in epistemology than to get down to the hard grind of mastering empirical disciplines" (lxxxi). To argue that it marks a decisive phase in the evolution of Hegel's thought is to ignore the fact that Hegel was a systematic philosopher before and after the *Phenomenology* and although there are differences between the Jena systems and the Berlin system "it is difficult to see how many of them relate in any way whatever to what was accomplished in the *Phenomenology*" (lxviii). Its value consists almost entirely in providing a critique of Kantian and Fichtean approaches to philosophy. "Had Hegel been in as full a command of the *Philosophy of Spirit* as he was when lecturing upon the *Encyclopedia*," Petry claims, "the treatment of consciousness, the *Phenomenology* proper, would have been concluded with the discussion of the identity of thinghood and reason" (lxx). Thus, like Haering, who in 1933 argued that the *Phenomenology* of 1807 was in fact a palimpsest that should have concluded with the section on reason, and in fact returns to its original form in the Nürnberg lectures,[25] Petry sees the primary accomplishment of the *Phenomenology* as being the overcoming of the antinomy of subject and object, an antinomy that is resolved long before the book itself grinds to a halt.

There are clearly problems with Petry's approach, however enlightening it is to see someone finally damn the monster rather than praise it, warts and all. The simplest problem lies at the very point of contact with Haering's thesis: the notion that somehow the abbreviated *Phenomenology* of Heidelberg and Berlin, already present in the Nürnberg lecture notes, represents the core of the 1807 work, and that Hegel was quick to realize this. The problem with this interpretation is that the philological evidence for it is questionable. Petry still relies on Hoffmeister's edition of the Nürnberg lectures, while Otto Pöggeler, in his critique of Haering's thesis in his 1961 article "Zur Deutung der Phänomenologie des Geistes" (now in *Hegel's Idee...*), had indicated that Hoffmeister's edition of the *Bewusstseinlehre für die Mittelklasse* of 1808-1809 (the so-called "Harvard Manuscript") misreads certain crucial marginal notations and obscures the fact that it was Hegel's original intention to lecture on the *entire Phenomenology*, dividing it into three sections: A) The consciousness of abstract objects (Ch. I-IV of the 1807 *Phenomenology*), B) The consciousness of the world of finite spirit (Ch. VI), and C) Consciousness of Absolute Spirit (Ch. VII-VIII).[26] However, Hegel's students apparently could not follow him, and the ambitious plan of lecturing on the entire *Phenomenology* was abandoned.[27] Hence at

25. Theodor Haering, "Die Entstehungsgeschichte der *Phänomenologie des Geistes*," *Verhandlung des 3. Hegelkongresses*, ed. B. Wigersma (Tübingen, 1934), pp. 118-138.

26. These changes have been incorporated into the Suhrkamp edition of the Nürnberg writings. See *Werke in Zwanzig Bänden, op.cit.*, vol. 4, pp. 71, 74, 611.

27. Pöggeler, *op.cit.*, pp. 199-203.

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least down to 1808 Hegel saw enough merit in the *complete Phenomenology* to attempt a journey through it with his students.

It is, of course, possible to place aside the question of whether there was an *Urphänomenologie* that ended with the chapter on reason, and instead simply argue that the work is more coherent if read in the shortened form. This indeed is the main thrust of Petry's argument. A response to this sort of objection must show whether in fact anything is to be gained by dragging the *Phenomenology* as a study of the "experience of consciousness" out into a full blown "Phenomenology of Spirit" dealing with matters which might more tidily be left to the study of the Objective and Absolute Spirit. Werner Marx's 1971 book, *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit* is now the most readily accessible case for arguing that indeed there is a coherence to the work as a whole. At first glance his study appears rather unpromising: yet another commentary on the methodological statements which open the *Phenomenology*, it sidesteps the more difficult task of explaining, at any given moment within Hegel's argument, what exactly is going on. Furthermore, the book is best understood against the background of a series of German discussions by Pöggeler, Hans Friedrich Fulda, Rüdiger Bubner, and Gadamer; with only the latter in English[28] it seems unlikely that many readers will know what Marx is talking about when he begins by stating that "In recent years many of the old questions about the interpretation of the *Phenomenology of Spirit* have again been revived" (ix). Neither the initial questions — posed by Haering, Haym, et al — nor the revivals are very well-known to most English-speaking readers.

The merit of the book, however, lies in a discussion of two central methodological problems of the *Phenomenology* that is lucid and compelling enough to make sense even to those unfamiliar with the considerably more advanced level of German discussion of the *Phenomenology*. The first problem discussed is that of the relation between the "educational history" of consciousness, advancing from the level of natural consciousness and phenomenal knowledge to that of Absolute knowledge, and the educational history of *Geist* itself, which is traced in the discussions of cultural forms which make up the bulk of the third section of the *Phenomenology*. The second main theme of the book, given much less attention, is an examination of the function of the "phenomenologist" himself, the narrative "we" whose introductions and conclusions flank the actual presentations of the movement of consciousness. While neither of these problems has been ignored in existing English-language literature on the *Phenomenology*, Marx's detailed examination of the way in which these methodological issues are handled in the Preface and Introduction to the *Phenomenology* is far more rigorous than anything to have appeared to date.

At the heart of the first problem is the issue of the relation of the two parts of the *Phenomenology* that forever threaten to fall apart: the tracing out of consciousness's path, which proceeds through a series of shapes of consciousness, and the tracing out of the path of *Geist* itself which involves shapes that are, in Hegel's words, "distinguished from the previous ones by the fact that they are real Spirits, actualities in the strict meaning of the word, and instead of being shapes merely of consciousness, are shapes of a world" (*Phenomenology* 265). Marx sees the motive for this transition from what has been in effect a "science of the experience of consciousness" to a "Phenomenology of Spirit" proper as resting on Hegel's discussion of the type of education (*Bildung*) which consciousness must receive. In the Preface, Hegel argues that *Bildung* moves on two different levels: that of the individual consciousness and

28. Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Hegel's Dialectic: Five Hermeneutical Studies*, trans. P. Christopher Smith (New Haven, 1976).

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that of the "universal individual, self-conscious spirit." At any given stage the achievements of the universal individual represent the "inorganic nature" on which the individual consciousness rests, and hence the task of education at any point must be the assimilation of this inorganic nature into the consciousness itself. This process of education cannot thus be limited simply to an inventory of the shapes which appear to consciousness in the course of the path of doubt and despair that culminates in the realization, with the section on Reason, that subject and object are in fact one. Rather, a more concrete, historical lesson must be added to that which is learned within the immanent trajectory of consciousness.

The mixing of transcendental philosophy and history which Haym so abhorred thus rests on the important modification Hegel made in Kant's transcendental unity of apperception: it is not simply posited as existing, nor is it simply to be developed in a history of consciusness of the sort outlined by Schelling and Fichte; it evolves historically in the form of ethical nature, i.e., in the domain of objective spirit. Because Hegel has de-centered transcendental subjectivity from the individual consciousness, there is a need to push the path of the deduction of transcendental subjectivity beyond the confines of the chapter on reason. Because individual subjectivity nevertheless rests upon this transcendental subjectivity and indeed partakes of the standpoint achieved by reflection-philosophy now as a prejudice of "natural consciousness," it is possible for the *Phenomenology of Spirit* to take its point of departure from the "Science of the Experience of Consciousness." Once the relation between consciousness and *Geist* has been posed in this way it becomes clearer what has been lost in the truncated *Phenomenology* of the *Encyclopedia*: the entire historical dimension in which the development of Absolute knowledge has been situated in the *Phenomenology*. History of course plays a role in the *Encyclopedia*, but it is a confined role, to be reached by a path that leads from anthropology, phenomenology, and psychology, through most of "Objective Spirit" until finally, after a discussion of the role of the state within the realm of *Sittlichkeit*, we come to a discussion of "World History" whose contents must struggle against the confines of the place it occupies within the system.

While the *motive* for the linking of a history of the experience of consciousness with a history of *Geist* may be clearer by this examination, the question of how successful Hegel was in realizing this goal remains. Such a question can probably not be settled by a methodological examination of the Introduction to the *Phenomenology* (written before the composition of the bulk of the text) which simply promises us that the experience of consciousness will "comprehend nothing less than the entire system of consciousness, or the entire realm of truth of Spirit," and the Preface, written after the composition, which justifies the shift in the type of shapes that appear in terms of the necessities of education. The burden of proof ultimately falls where Hegel insists it would have to fall in any case, on the arrangement and coherence of the body of the text itself. But there is one further methodological issue whose examination will do much to shed light on the coherence of the text itself: the problem of the contribution made by the phenomenologist who narrates the course taken by consciousness. Marx argues that the function of the phenomenologist is five-fold: "The phenomenologist . . . is in the *first* place he who takes phenomenal knowledge along on the road. *Secondly*, he is the initiator of the movement of the history of experience, and hence also the dialectical history of experience. *Thirdly*, by means of his superior knowledge, the phenomenologist surveys the dialectical movement of experience and the category of necessity underlying it, which makes possible the exoteric presentation, and hence the justification vis-a-vis natural consciousness. *Fourthly*, as a result of the foregoing

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history of experience, there arises for the phenomenologist the synthesis positively apprehended as principle. *Fifthly*, he can act as a guide for phenomenal knowledge" (91-92).

The contribution in each of these cases is of a different magnitude. With regard to the first and fourth, the function remains purely narrative and contemplative: the phenomenologist lays out the history that consciousness has taken in a more coherent form, thus elucidating the deeper significance of these events. This much has long been apparent to commentators on the *Phenomenology*. The second point has been noted by Kenley Dove in an article on Hegel's method that pointed out that the function of the narrative "we" is anything but contemplative in the opening sections of the book.[29] Indeed, for there to be a dialectical movement at all, it is necessary for natural consciousness to be forced to place itself in the paradoxes of the first chapter which begin the journey down the path of doubt and despair (Marx, 90). The fifth point, never well developed by Marx, can mean either that the phenomenologist remains in the role of passive observer or, if it turns out that there is a need for further prodding beyond the opening sections of the *Phenomenology*, plays the more active role of setting up situations in which consciousness can confound itself, a role akin to Emile's tutor, to drag out the ever-popular comparison. For our purposes, however, it is the third of these functions that is most troubling and indeed it is here that Marx's discussion enters into one of the more heavily worked regions of recent Hegel scholarship.

In brief, the problem which many readers of Hegel's account of the experience of consciousness doubtlessly have is that the shifts from one figure of consciousness to another and the lessons learned in the process seem much more necessary and coherent to the narrative "for us" than they do either to the suffering consciousness which is undergoing all this torture or, more significantly, to the suffering reader of the book. That the transitions may not be apparent for consciousness is of little account; the narrative structure of the *Phenomenology*, with its constant for it-for us oppositions presumes that some discrepancy like this is necessary, otherwise explanations about what is going on would be unnecessary. But, if the accounts which are supposed to hold true "for us" or "in itself" do not ring true to a reader who has endeavored to follow the argument, then a more serious problem arises. The necessity of a transition can obviously not simply be assured by having the narrator of the account tell us that the transition was necessary. The account must in some way be convincing to us.

As has been seen in the comments which opened the first installment of this review, it is precisely here that Charles Taylor questions the successfulness of Hegel's account in the *Phenomenology*. While Hegel, according to Taylor, provides us with an indubitable starting point and gives a strict ontological dialectic in the first three chapters of the book, once he moves beyond self-consciousness, we are left only with an "interpretive or hermeneutical dialectic" which is convincing only on the level of general plausibility, i.e., its ability to provide an account which "fits" (217-218). Findlay, in his introductory comments to the new translation of the *Phenomenology,* notices a related problem but is far more sanguine about the consequences. He implies that the possibility of other types of accounts, the looseness which in general characterizes interpretive or hermeneutic accounts, is not fatal to the *Phenomenology*. "There is no reason to think that Hegel thought that the path traced in the *Phenomenology*, though consisting throughout of necessary steps, was the only

29. Kenley Royce Dove, "Hegel's Phenomenological Method," in *Review of Metaphysics*, vol. XXIII, n. 4 (1970), pp. 615-641.

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path that the conscious spirit could have taken in rising from sensuous immediacy to Absolute knowledge. It was the main path that *had* been taken by the World Spirit in past history.... But this involved no pronouncement as to what pathway to Science would be taken by men in the future...." Hegel, in brief, does not, in Findlay's view, equate the *necessary* with the *unique* (vi).

Since the problem here is considerably broader than a debate about the argument of the *Phenomenology* itself, it is worth bringing a few of these issues to light, especially since they are taken up in this fashion in Raymond Plant's critique of Hegel's attempts to bring about a reconciliation with reality by showing the necessity of what exists. Plant's immediate target is Frithjof Bergmann's 1964 article, "The Purpose of Hegel's System," which in turn is a critique of the equation of Hegel's notion of necessity with strict logical necessity.[30] Bergmann argues that Hegel has no intention of meaning anything aproximating strict "deductive certainty" in his use of the term "necessity." Rather, what Hegel inherits from Fichte is a conception of necessity as "necessary for a purpose," in this case, a general account of what must be the case if there is to be a coherent, harmonious account of an order which *is not* constituted by thought, but is rather recollected and accounted for by systematic philosophy or science. It does not follow from such an enterprise that there is only one system possible. Indeed, as Petry shows well in his discussion of Hegel's reformulations of the various parts of the *Philosophy of Subjective Spirit*, Hegel's attitude towards the structural arrangement of the material remained in a good deal of flux and was rarely as bound by the structure of the *Logic* as is usually supposed. Hence, in Bergmann's view, Hegel's demonstration of the "rationality of the world," his attempt to "prove that it is a process with a purpose" is something which is "impossible to *demonstrate*...with a few arguments or to derive...as a conclusion from several premises. It is the sort of thing that can only be *shown,* and in order to show it one has to specify the purpose and then indicate in detail how everything contributes to its realization" (200). This, as the reader may have seen, is very close to Taylor's account of the status of Hegel's historical or interpretive dialectics. But the crucial point of Bergmann's argument is that it is wrong to assume that Hegel ever intended to provide an account which had more than the sort of hermeneutic or interpretive plausibility which Taylor maintains is simply not enough.

Plant's critique is most telling at the point which matters most to his argument: the relation between necessity and reconciliation in Hegel's thought. Unfortunately, this is also the point where Bergmann is most cavalier. Pointing to the continuity between Hegel's early explorations of the dichotomies between God and man, and between reason and emotions, Bergmann argues "it is these 'disharmonies' that Hegel tried to resolve in his attempts to go beyond Fichte and to demonstrate the rationality not only of consciousness but of the world. It may seem strange that Hegel thought demonstrating the rationality of the world was a way to achieve this. But one has to remember that for Hegel the word 'reason' still had a magical sound" (196). This clearly won't do, and this explanation of the relation between Hegel's early and later stages is itself a rather "magical" way out of a problem which bears considerably closer investigation. Plant's examination, however, is laden with its own difficulties.

At the heart of Plant's critique lies a rather untenable either-or. *Either* Hegel treates the immanent teleology of consciousness coming to know itself through "natural and social developments" as a "regulative idea" *or* the "teleology of consciousness... requires some kind of metaphysical justification." Since the teleology of consciousness

30. Frithjof H. Bergmann, "The Purpose of Hegel's System," in *Journal of the History of Philosophy* (1964), pp. 189-204.

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is not a mere regulative idea, as is apparent from Hegel and Schelling's transformation of Kant's third critique, Plant is convinced that Hegel's notion of Spirit or Absolute Idea "is really a metaphysical counterpart of the Christian God" and thus provides the needed grounding for the teleology of consciousness. Since the idea stands in a "creative relationship to the world" it can explain "how the necessary development of consciousness is built into reality and how the philosopher eventually is able to grasp it in its process of development" (132). As evidence for invocations of this "creative relationship" in Hegel's work, Plant cites passages from the early paragraphs of the *Philosophy of Nature*, the discussion of the "tragedy of *Sittlichkeit*" in the *Natural Law* essay, and the linkage of the process of historical evolution with the rule of God in the Introduction to *Reason in History* (132-133). One may quibble about the adequacy of this evidence: the *Natural Law* essay, for instance, was written at a period when Hegel still was under the sway of the Spinozism he shared with Schelling and in any case is being deployed metaphorically to illustrate the concrete fact that the ethical community must give part of itself over to the realm of material labor if it is to survive. But even granting that Hegel does at times speak as if there is a creative and hence metaphysical relation between idea and world, a rather compelling argument may be raised against Plant's belief that Hegel's account of necessity rests on this sort of basis.

It is possible to treat such grandiose statements as Klaus Hartmann has proposed in his "non-metaphysical" approach to Hegel's system.[31] Hartmann suggests that Hegel's system includes certain "maximal claims" which violate what in fact is the minimal and coherent heart of his system. What is coherent and defensible in Hegel is a "transformation of what is found, or granted as a fact or as a deliverance of science or naive philosophy, into a reconstruction in the form of rational necessity, or in *a priori* form" (103). In this view, the dispute between Bergmann and Plant is off the mark; we are not faced with a choice between Bergmann's "necessity for a purpose," the purpose being a desire to provide a coherent account of the world, and Plant's metaphysically grounded necessity. Rather, another alternative exists: a system of categories, generated by an architectonic which stretches from "the zero case of categorization (being)...to the fulfilled case of categorization, where thought categorizes itself as having enclosed all determination (concept)." Guided at each step by the alternative perspectives of being-in-itself and being-for-itself it is possible to carry out a systematic "hermeneutic of rationality" which involves neither metaphysical claims nor indeterminacy in the outlining of the basic categorical structure (104-107).

The merit of Hartmann's proposal lies in its ability to give coherence to Hegel's general project while enabling us at the same time to isolate cases where Hegel seems to have overstepped the bounds he has set for himself in the far greater number of cases where he is proceeding rigorously. Significantly, the overstepping occurs in precisely the cases which interest Plant most: at moments when he personifies the Idea of God and gives it a constitutive role to play in the passage from logic to *Realphilosophie* and when history itself is introduced as a structuring force in the *Lectures on the Philosophy of History* and in the discussion of *Absolute Spirit*. A resolution of this discrepancy between Hegel's systematic achievements and his own

31. Klaus Hartmann, "Hegel: A Non-Metaphysical View," in *Hegel: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. A. MacIntyre (Garden City, New York, 1972), pp. 101-124. For an extension and application of Hartmann's aproach to the *Science of Logic*, see the extremely suggestive dissertation by Thomas J. Bole, *Hegel's Science of Logic as a Transcendental Ontology*, unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Texas at Austin, 1973 (University Microfilms 74-5198).

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self-understanding of what he was doing, expressed most ambitiously in passages like those just noted, may have to be considerably messier than any of the parties involved might be satisfied with. Hegel's system, considered "for us" or "in itself," can be coherently reconstructed along the lines Hartmann has proposed without metaphysical claims and indeed, *pace* Taylor, may remain an emminently serviceable ontology. Hegel's emphatic and uncharacteristically desperate assertions that somehow having possession of this ontology makes one feel reconciled to reality should not perhaps be taken as the ultimate criteria for judging the success of his project, but they do have considerable value as historical evidence of the concerns which he was never able to integrate into his system. Hence, *pace* Plant, the failure of Hegel's project of reconciliation requires no attempt to patch up his ontology with notions like "loose entailments," since examined on its own terms, the ontology hangs together fairly well. But that is not to claim that, on its own terms, the system can "reconcile" us to reality.

This same tension between a systematically coherent, although somewhat austere project, and considerably more passionate expressions that testify to some unsatisfied practical imperative can be found within the *Phenomenology* itself. Even without accepting Hartmann's "non-metaphysical" reading of the *Logic* it is possible to understand what the *Phenomenology* is trying to accomplish without assuming that it must produce an ascending dialectic that has the sort of ontological certitude that Taylor demands. Objections to the *Phenomenology* that question whether there is not a certain arbitrariness in the path it takes or even defenses of Hegel's arguments that use the metaphor of "branching proofs" of mathematical problems both seem to presume that the purpose of the *Phenomenology* is that of raising naive consciousness to the level at which the *Logic* begins; in short, to move consciousness from one place to another or, in Hegel's metaphor, to give us a ladder that lifts us into the first chapter of the *Logic*. If the ladder could be pointed in a number of different directions, the critic of the *Phenomenology* argues, how can we be sure that we have in fact reached a secure starting point for the deduction of all that is? To which the defender of the *Phenomenology* of the stripe of Findlay or Bergmann would retort: first of all the goal is not to *deduce* everything, but rather to provide a rational account that allows for a good deal of contingency and second of all, it doesn't matter what angle the ladder happens to take, all that is important is that one comes to the goal of absolute knowledge.

While the first of the defender's points is certainly correct, the second point is more questionable, although understandable. The problem lies in the assumption, to be sure encouraged by Hegel, that the point of the *Phenomenology* is to prepare one for a reading of the *Science of Logic*. Despite the fact that few have been able to explain *exactly what* the *Phenomenology* gives to the reader of the *Science of Logic* that he or she might not have already had before wading into the former, it has been an article of faith, at least until recently, that the *Phenomenology* is some sort of propaedeutic. But what sort? The ladder metaphor is, on second examination, rather dubious here: what can it mean to say that the *Phenomenology* "raises" consciousness to the level of the *Logic*? Beyond the exhiliration (or relief) that one may have with the rush of the last chapter of the *Phenomenology*, what is one supposed to carry from the *Phenomenology* to the *Logic*?

The answer, on the basis of important work of Hans Friedrich Fulda and Johannes Heinrichs,[32] falls into two parts: (1) There is simply *nothing* that one takes from the

32. Hans Friedrich Fulda, "Zur Logik der Phänomenologie" in Fulda and Henrich, *op.cit.*,

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Phenomenology to the *Science of Logic*, composed in Nürnberg. The goal of the *Phenomenology* cannot be *that specific system* of categories. (2) However, if one looks backward through the train of categories generated by the *Phenomenology*, the outlines of a logic resembling that of the 1804-1805 Jena *Logic and Metaphysics* becomes apparent. The working out of the specific character of the connection between the *Phenomenology* and this logic is approached in a different fashion by each, and a closer examination of Fulda's tightly argued article, let alone Heinrich's massive study, would strain this already hefty review to the breaking point. To summarize brutally: the significance of the approach which Fulda has suggested and Heinrichs has to a large measure carried out lies in seeing the *Phenomenology* not simply as a passage from the level of naive consciousness to the level of scientific consciousness, but rather as *an ordered sequence of levels* each of which corresponds to some portion of the *Logic*. To return to the ladder metaphor again, what matters most in this reading is not that one *ascends* to the level of the *Logic*. Rather, what is important about the ladder is, as it were, the spacing and organization of the rungs over which one passes. At the end of the ladder one is not at some place which is of particular significance, but one does have, by virtue of the very journey up the ladder, an ordered sequence of categories that can now be re-expressed, no longer in the language of consciousness and object which dominates the *Phenomenology*, but rather in the pure "ether" of the *Logic* itself.

Form this perspective, the problem of the necessity of the stages through which one passes takes on a different character. The notion that there can be alternative paths is to some degree sustained, since presumably the specific content of consciousness's experience could be different. But the logical rigor of the work, the categories that correspond to the various *Gestalten* of Spirit which the book traces, are not simply contingent. They must parallel in a much more precise way than has usually been assumed the various stages of the logic itself.

What Fulda and Heinrichs have provided then is an approach to the *Phenomenology* that breaks completely with the assumption, predominant in German Hegel scholarship since Haering, that the unity of the book can only be grasped historically and not logically.[33] To the extent that German Hegel scholarship runs the constant risk of becoming simply Hegel-philology (a state of affairs which, it must be stressed, should not feed the smug satisfaction of the all too many English-speaking commentators who seem to feel that such philological considerations are beneath consideration) the new tack taken by Fulda and Heinrichs is a welcome one. However, it is only fair to allow Pöggeler a rejoinder here, since his objection to Fulda's line of inquiry, while by no means vitiating the promise of a program which Heinrichs has now made even more apparent, does raise a problem that parallels that which has been noted with respect to Hartmann's "non-metaphysical" reading of the *Logic*. If one examines, Pöggeler argues, "how Hegel takes up the religious tradition and seeks to resolve it or also is not able to resolve it with the newly arising emancipated society, it must then appear as absurd, that the Hegelian accomplishment should be nothing other than a clothing of logical moments in figures of consciousness."[34]

In the face of these sorts of questions Pöggeler holds out for a philologically informed philosophical reconstruction. In reply, Heinrichs suggests that the results

pp. 391-425. Johannes Heinrichs, *Die Logik der Phänomenologie des Geistes* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1974).

33. Fulda, *op.cit.*, p. 393.

34. Pöggeler, "Die Komposition der Phänomenologie...," *op.cit.*, pp. 372-373.

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from Pöggeler to date have been a good deal of simultaneous *ja und nein* saying (88). This sort of schizophrenia should not be confused with what goes on in the *Phenomenology* proper, but it may be the standard occupational hazard of those who try to take both the logical claims and the passionate language of the book seriously. I must confess to the bad faith of being persuaded at one and the same time by both Pöggeler and Fulda-Heinrichs. The logical rigor of the book is there, and commentaries that simply repeat the content of the book in simpler form or become embedded in the details of the argument fall prey to the very problem that Hegel said, in his letter to Schelling, had befallen him in the composition of the book: the concept of the book suffers at the price of an elaboration of the content. Equally, if one sees anything of importance in the historical, political and religious studies that precede the *Phenomenology*, it is impossible to be convinced that he was simply using this material to generate a logical structure. It is not a reduction of philosophy to philology to ask if the minimal logical program that one can take out of the *Phenomenology* is in fact all that Hegel was trying to accomplish there. Or, if it was all he specifically set out to accomplish, can we simply overlook the painfully obvious fact that his becoming embedded in the details, his overly passionate language, or the political and theological concerns that continually recur in the book seem constantly to be reminding him of more ambitious tasks, temporarily (?) laid to one side while preparing an introduction to the "authentic science of the spirit"?

In an important sense, the exploration of these sorts of problems seems to be best facilitated by the confrontations of philological and systematic work on the *Phenomenology* that have been the hallmark of recent German Hegel scholarship. Certainly, neither Fulda nor Heinrichs would deny that one of the most significant insights in laying the foundations for the logical reconstruction of the *Phenomenology* was the understanding of the proper function *and dating* of the *Jena Logic and Metaphysics* manuscripts from 1804-1805. Conversely, one might hope that those taking up the non-logical aspects of the *Phenomenology*, that is, those exploring the ethical, political and religious themes within the *Phenomenology*, would pay some attention to the systematic function of this material within the *Phenomenology* itself. It is only this sort of awareness of alternative functions of any given part of the text that will prevent either overly austere logical reconstructions or fast and loose sets of variations on thematic materials ripped willy-nilly from the text.

Commentaries on the political and moral dimensions of the *Phenomenology* are few in number. The bibliography provided by Fulda and Henrich in their *Materialienband* notes comparatively little which could be so classified. Whe one does come across an exploration of political or moral themes, all too often it is simply an attempt to show how such general notions as alienation or objectification might be of political import. Indeed, the tendency has been to follow Lukàcs and reduce the political import of the *Phenomenology* to an anticipation of Marx's analysis of structures of alienated labor. What remains virtually ignored in all of this are the detailed explorations of morality, culture and politics that make up the latter half of the book.

Two recent studies are exceptions to this rule: Jonathan Robinson's *Duty and Hypocrisy in Hegel's Phenomenology of Mind*[35] and Judith N. Shklar's *Freedom and Independence: A Study of the Political Ideas of Hegel's Phenomenology of Mind.*[36] The former, a study of Hegel's critique of moral philosophy as found in Chapter VI of

35. (Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1977).
36. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976).

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the *Phenomenology* cannot be discussed here, although the work itself can easily be recommended as a clear and lucid discussion of a portion of the *Phenomenology* which should be quite accessible to students of ethics. The latter, which brings together a series of essays written by Shklar over the last decade on themes in Chapters V and VI, is of obvious importance to the concerns of this review — as much by what it fails to accomplish as by what it actually does. The book is conceived as a commentary for "students of political theory, both undergraduate and graduate, who have found Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind* incomprehensible and who might, with the help of a guideline such as this, manage to understand it more readily" (ix). How well it succeeds on its own terms is difficult to judge. Shklar provides a running commentary on Hegel's discussions of "Individuality which takes itself to be real in and for itself" (V.C.), "Self-Alienated Spirit: Culture" (VI. B) and "Spirit which is certain of itself. Morality" (VI.C). These discussions are preceded by an analysis of the comments Hegel makes about the classical *polis*, which Shklar brings together from a number of sections of the work. An introductory chapter sketches the general topography of the book. Evaluating the success of the book as a commentary would require an extended discussion of what one needs to know about the *Phenomenology* to make sense out of it. Such a discussion will not be undertaken here, although it is worth raising the question of whether the notorious difficulties of the *Phenomenology* are alleviated by simply *recounting* what Hegel has said in a different way. Are not the more serious problems the reader encounters not simply with *what* Hegel is saying — which, while occasionally opaque, is hardly as bad as is often claimed — as *why* he happens to be saying *this* precisely at *this point*? If the latter is the case, then we need something more than just a retelling of the story. We need a commentary that makes some rather general systematic claims about the structure of Hegel's argument.[37]

Other questions about Shklar's commentary will be pursued here. The book is a discussion of those chapters of the *Phenomenology* that deal "with moral and political ideas" (ix). But, if there are political and moral ideas in the *Phenomenology*, what are they doing there? Given what we know from Fulda and Heinrichs, how can a discussion of politics and morality advance Hegel's systematic argument? Given what we know about Hegel's political writings from roughly the same period, what can be said about their relation to the rather strange discussion of political themes that takes place within the *Phenomenology*? In short, what is the relation of the discussion of these political and moral themes in Hegel's *Phenomenology* to the practical and theoretical philosophy of Hegel's Jena period?

These are not questions that Shklar poses. Indeed, her book seems to foreclose such questions through a number of less than helpful moves. The reader is sent to Stanley Rosen's book for "logical bearings" (xi), an unlikely division of labor in light of some easily apparent discrepancies between what one is told in the two books.[38] There is little attempt to relate the discussion of the *Phenomenology* to others of the Jena writings on politics and morality. Indeed, some of the closing comments on the difference between the *Phenomenology* and the *Philosophy of Right* present as

37. These comments are, of course, also applicable to the paragraph by paragraph commentary provided by Findlay in the new translation of the *Phenomenology*.

38. Shklar, for example, find in the *Phenomenology* a challenging of "one of the most fundamental assumptions of classical thought: the superiority of theoretical over practical reason" (200) while Rosen in contrast argues in his book that Hegel gives primacy to the theoretical accomplishments of the *Logic* (33, 185, 280-283). Likewise, Rosen's insistence on the apoliticality of the *Phenomenology* (for instance pp. 183-184) points in a rather different direction than Shklar's reading.

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transformations in Hegel's thinking positions that were already elaborated in the Jena *Entwürfe* but not taken up in the *Phenomenology*.[39] And there is no attempt to address the reader who is familiar with other versions of what the *Phenomenology* might be about. Shklar avoids discussing how her argument differs from others in hope that "the readers of this commentary will immediately turn to the *Phenomenology* itself and then be in a position to cope with the outstanding disputes and various readings directly" (xi).

It is probably *only* a reader unfamiliar with the present squabbles over what Hegel was up to in the *Phenomenology* who can be very sanguine about some of Shklar's characterizations of the book. She tends to refer to the method of the book as a sort of "historical psychology" (8, 9, 43) without suggesting how this psychology is to be differentiated from the psychology which stands juxtaposed to phenomenology in the later systems. At one point she goes so far as to identify Hegel's discussions of "cycles of self-consciousness" with his discussion of *Geist* (73), thus reconciling the tension between the *Phenomenology* as a "Science of the Experience of Consciousness" with the *Phenomenology* as "Phenomenology of Spirit" with a stroke of the pen. If this sliding between consciousness and *Geist* and between psychology and phenomenology were not troubling enough, other passages leave one bewildered as to what Shklar expects us to find in Hegel's text. For instance, we are told at one point that "Proust's remembering was. . . very much like Hegel's in design, a going inward to create a new image out of the past. Proust's range was far greater. For though Hegel roamed over all ages and Proust over just his own time, Hegel described the adventures of the intellect, while Proust omitted nothing that men and women can experience. His was the more universal phenomenology of the soul" (55). What this has to do with Hegel's project of a phenomenology of *spirit* is anyone's guess.

In short, it is not clear that Shklar takes the systematic claims of the *Phenomenology* very seriously and thus, from the start, any confrontation between the structure and the content of the *Phenomenology* is ruled out. She cites with sympathy Josiah Royce's dictum "In the presence of the wayward, I too may be free to judge in my own individual way" (5). It is hardly good advice, and fortunately Shklar does not always follow it. But we are told that "Hegel's work is an incomplete map which we are free to fill out and redraw in our own time and place" (56). It is suggested that the book "might well have ended" with the close of Chapter VI (203) — apparently sparing the reader the chapters on Religion and Absolute Knowing, where the level of reflective thought (*Vorstellung*), the animus of the Preface, is finally overcome. In short, the attitude toward those aspects of the *Phenomenology* that touch on issues other than politics is casual at best.

This casualness is unfortunate, since Shklar's discussions of the political content of the *Phenomenology* are by far the most extensive and quite often the most sensitive explorations of those concerns now available. For that reason it is worth seeing how far we can go in forcing some of the issues she has sidestepped. A point of departure can be taken from Jean Hyppolite's *Genesis and Structure of Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit* — a book which, strangely, is not even mentioned in Shklar's account. In the introduction to his discussion of Hegel's chapter on *Geist,* Hyppolite poses the issue of

39. For example, the discussion of legal personhood in the *Philosophy of Right* is contrasted with that in the *Phenomenology* (Shklar, 205-206) without noting that parallel discussions of personhood, without the pejorative associations which accompany the term in the *Phenomenology* were present as early as the first Jena system (*G.S.*, vol. 6, p. 326; the point is considerably developed in subsequent drafts, see *G.S.*, vol. 8, p. 231ff.)

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the status of political analyses in Hegel's *Phenomenology* rather concisely with a contrast of positions advanced by Franz Rosenzweig and Martin Busse in the 1920s and 1930s.[40]

Rosenzweig[41] sees the *Phenomenology* as somewhat anomalous in the development of Hegel's writings on politics. In it Hegel abandons the conception of the state as the most exalted form of human community that had been elaborated in the *System der Sittlichkeit* and the natural law essay. According to Rosenzweig, pride of place now goes to morality and religion, which would appear, on the basis of the *Phenomenology*, to represent higher forms of community (326-328). Hyppolite rejects this rather suspect reading, which in effect posits not one but two rather dramatic ruptures in Hegel's thinking about the role of the state. "We would have to agree that there was a break between Hegel's earlier work and the *Phenomenology* and the later work. According to this view, the idea of the *human city*. . .is abandoned in favor of a *City of God*. Later, the argument continues, Hegel returned to his divinization of the state" (327). Clearly, this cumbersome an argument has little to recommend it. In response, Hyppolite advances Busse's case: The *Phenomenology* is viewed as having a position that is fundamentally identical to that of his later *Philosophy of Right*.[42] Apparent differences in the two works are accounted for by noting their rather different concerns. *The Philosophy of Right*, as a part of the *Encyclopedia*, is concerned with the articulations of the moments of the system without attention to the *prise de conscience* that lies at the heart of the account of the *Phenomenology* (329-331). Hence though the *Phenomenology* may cover some of the same terrain as the later system, it will do so from a different perspective *and* (as perhaps Hyppolite does not stress enough) with a different intent. The *Phenomenology* is concerned with the experience which consciousness undergoes and which Spirit makes, and hence must present its materials in terms of a structure that plays off the perspectives of "for consciousness" and "in itself." It does so with the intent of providing a prolegomena to a system (although assuredly, a system that in all likelihood would have been different from that eventually published in 1817), not an outline of the system itself.

Hyppolite is also keenly aware that there was something fundamentally new at stake in the *Phenomenology*, even if it could not be posed in as simple a fashion as Rosenzweig had suggested. Discussing the *System der Sittlichkeit* and the natural right essay, Hyppolite notes, "Despite the beauty and validity of certain passages, these works of Hegel's seem oddly archaic. The polis and the Platonic ideal mingle with 18th-century states in a completely unhistorical exposition" (331). Certainly, in these writings new wine is literally being poured into old bottles. Both works are dominated by the dichotomous opposition of household and polity which Hegel seems to have taken over from Aristotle's *Politics* and sought to restore on the basis of the chiasmus of spirit and nature in identity philosophy. Hence, both works face the problem of fitting into this archaic structure the radically modern domain of economic exchanges that take place outside the confines of the household, yet which represent essentially private activities. Needless to say, the results are not happy ones: modern economy is either conceived rather unconvincingly as analogous to the householding of the ancients (the

40. Jean Hyppolite, *Genesis and Structure of Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. S. Cherniak and J. Heckman (Evanston, 1974), further citations will be made in the text.

41. *Hegel und der Staat* (Oldenburg, 1920).

42. Martin Busse, *Hegels Phänomenologie des Geistes und der Staat* (Berlin, 1931). Busse (the name is spelled incorrectly in the translation of Hyppolite; there is no umlaut) was one of the leading Fascist interpreters of Hegel's political thought. See also the companion volume by Julius Binder, Martin Busse and Karl Larenz, *Einführung in Hegels Rechtsphilosophie* (Berlin, 1931).

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argument of the natural law essay) or its components are broken up and assigned to both the public and private sides of the opposition (as appears to be the case in the *System der Sittlichkeit*).[43] Matters are not helped by the persistence in these essays of invocations of long-vanished classes: the Aristotlean *politeuieun* in the natural law essay, and the class of priests and elders in the *System der Sittlichkeit*.[44]

Hence the *Phenomenology* would seem to represent for Hyppolite not so much an explicit rejection of certain earlier political claims as a fundamental rupture in the metatheory in whose terms Hegel frames arguments about politics. "As he discovered his originality with respect to Schelling, he became aware of the necessity of the *prise de conscience,* and he contraposed the concept to intuition. From that moment on, the ideal of the ancient city was relegated to the past. The substantive spirit of antiquity became the modern spirit, and history no longer appeared alien to the absolute idea" (331-332). With this recognition, the demise of the ancient *polis* became the irrevocable price of the emergence of self-conscious forms of political community.

Shklar's account does not fall into the same obvious errors as Rosenzweig's. While she does not develop his real insight and note the apparent peculiarity of this discussion of politics in which all of the typical themes of Hegel's earlier political writings (especially the concept of representation by estates) are absent,[45] she does not share his error and take the *Phenomenology* to be elaborating a positive doctrine of politics on its own. Rather than outlining the rational structure of the modern state, the task of the *Phenomenology* is, in Shklar's view, fundamentally negative. "It shows with utmost clarity what the modern state is *not* like and what degree of civic integrity had once been possible" (76). In place of a discussion of the present political order, we have a meditation on a departed one, the classical *polis*. "If much of the *Phenomenology* is a lament for Hellas, that is not due to pure nostalgia, but mainly to Hegel's polemic against the false consciousness of subjectivity and isolation" (85). The *polis* is a counter image against which to measure modern society. It is not capable of being revived (73, 12, 39-41).

The center of gravity of Shklar's account is the exploration of the way in which this vision of the ancient *polis* is marshalled against the disintegration of the modern public realm. She is keenly alert to the peculiar character of Hegel's neo-classicism. Unlike the majority of his German contemporaries, his vision of Greece was more political than aesthetic, while unlike the more political visions of antiquity that could be found within the non-German republican tradition, his preferred political order was Athenian rather than Spartan or Roman (13, 74, 88, 90, 142). While these comments may underestimate the extent to which *other* German Grecophiles were conscious of the political dimensions of the *polis* and while Shklar may have underestimated the extent to which Hegel could at times manifest simultaneous loyalties to both the *polis* and a Machiavelli-inspired vision of the republican state,[46]

43. *Werke in Zwanzig Bänden*, vol. 2, pp. 481-495 (*Natural Law*, 93-104); *System of Ethical Life*, pp. 129-131.

44. *Werke . . ., op.cit.*, vol. 2, p. 489 (*Natural Law*, 100); *System of Ethical LIfe, op.cit.*, p. 158.

45. The point is discussed in Pöggeler, "Die Komposition . . .," *op.cit.*, p. 332. See also the comprehensive study by Rolf K. Hocever, *Stände und Repräsentation beim jungen Hegel* (Munich, 1968).

46. Henry Hatfield has stressed the role of studies of Greek political life in the education of students at Göttingen in his *Aesthetic Paganism in German Literature* (Cambridge, 1964), p. 194; for the importance of Machiavelli, see Otto Pöggeler, "Hegel et Machiavel. Renaissance Italienne et Idéalisme Allemand" in *Archives de Philosophie*, vol. 41, n. 3 (1978), pp. 435-467.

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these comments are for the most part very much to the mark. By spelling out the specific character of Hegel's attachment to the *polis*, she avoids dissolving his Hellenic vision into that of his contemporaries.

But, when all this is said, it still seems that Shklar's claim that Athens represented to Hegel the sole image of what a *free* life (38-41) -- as opposed to the independent life of modern man -- could have been like seems to overstate the case, just as her characterization of the *Phenomenology* as "his elegy to that world of freedom" (208) seems to misread the thrust of the work. However caustic Hegel's views might be on the pretensions of autonomous subjectivity, he never views it simply as an irrevocable curse that forever separates us from the *polis*. It is the fate of modern times, and as Hegel argued in his inaugural thesis at Jena: "Principium scientiae moralis est reverentia fato habenda" (*Werke* II, 533). His reverence for the fate is expressed in one of the more beautiful passages of the *Phenomenology*. Reflecting on how, with the collapse of the religions of the *polis*, we are left with statues which "are now only stones from which the living soul has flown" and how hymns "are words from which belief has gone," his elegy for Athens turns into a striking affirmation of modernity: "But, just as the girl who offers us the plucked fruits is more than the Nature which directly provides them... because she sums all this up in a higher mode, in the gleam of the self-conscious eye and in the gesture with which she offers them, so too the spirit of fate that presents us with those works of art is more than the ethical life and the actual world of that nation, for it is the *inwardizing* in us [*Er-innerung*, recollection] of the spirit which in them was still *outwardly* manifested; it is the spirit of the tragic fate which gathers all those individual gods and attributes of the (divine) substance into one pantheon, into the Spirit that is conscious of itself as Spirit" (*Phenomenology* 456). The construction of a pantheon -- the task assigned to the mythical Theseus of Hegel's theologico-politico treatise -- is now the work of history, a work that has been accomplished and which leaves us, by the very act which separates us from the Hellenic world, with that capacity for self-reflection that places us above it and allows us to internalize it.

The *Phenomenology* is not so much an elegy for Hellas as an exorcism of Hegel's own obsession with Athens. It is an apolitical work which, as Shklar notes, "ends when philosophy reaches its goal which lies beyond law, morality and religion" (208). But the later works Hegel writes about politics must be seen as the sequel to this journey. Hegel does not, as Shklar claims, "ask us simply to forget the lost world and to accept the rules such as they are" (208). He has rather come to the point where he can see the way forward for an elaboration of a systematic political theory which rests no longer on an attempt to imitate the grounding of the *polis* on "natural *Sittlichkeit*" but rather builds the modern state within the "world of *Geist*," whose boundaries are first sketched within the *Phenomenology*. As George Armstrong Kelly has argued in a paper on Hegel's debt to Schiller's *Aesthetic Letters* now reprinted in his *Hegel's Retreat from Eleusis*,[47] "in post-classical society, politics will have to emerge in a new way. The state will have to mediate what was once 'immediate,' much in the same way that speculative thought will have to reorder, recover, and remember those harmonies that were once direct and felt.... The turn toward politics is correlative to the turn toward philosophy....the aesthetic state of absolute *Sittlichkeit* is impossible. That impossibility makes necessary a politics and a state mediated by thought" (82, 86). This then is the task which is set for the *Philosophy of Right*: a state which rests on *Geist*, not natural ethical life, a state which is consciously mediated by thought.

47. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978).

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GOLDMANN'S LEGACY*

by Sami Naïr

The categories of *totality* and *coherence* were central to Goldmann's thought. He refused any explanation not founded on these categories — even concerning his own world view. That is why an analysis of his political conceptions is impossible without reference to these fundamental ideas. He was a man who situated his thought in the dialectical "tradition" of Hegel, Marx and Lukacs. But this filiation does not reveal Goldmann's specific contribution. To reply to this *modesty* of the author of *The Hidden God* is to resolve the question of what is original in his thought.

Goldmann discovered Lukacs through *History and Class Consciousness* in Vienna in 1933, at the same time he encountered Austro-Marxism (Bauer, Renner, Hilferding, Max and Friedrich Adler). Austro-Marxism, of course, was under Kantian influence: a reappropriated Kant, but Kant all the same. Although Goldmann never emphasized this double encounter, it is clear that it had a determining influence on his thought. It was no accident that his first book was on Kant.

Although in this study, he provided a summary of the three *Critiques*, the main focus was on the relation between *individual and community* in Kantian philosophy. In so doing, Goldmann settled accounts not only with Kant and bourgeois philosophy from Descartes on, but with Marxism as well. In his efforts to demonstrate the limits of Kantian political philosophy, Goldmann attempted at the same time to *destroy* its argument by exposing the abstract and formal role attributed to the individual as social being. This critique was undertaken from a materialist and dialectical conception of human community, and led Goldmann to raise the problem of how to *construct* social individuality out of a radical critique of the abstract community. *La Communauté Humaine et l'Univers chez Kant* (1948) is based on this theme. Yet, if Goldmann's reading of Kant is based on *History and Class Consciousness*, it is also aimed *against* Lukacs. Had not Lukacs' solution to this problem involved eliminating the concrete individual?

Politically, Lukacs' insertion of the individual into the class, as well as his identification of the class with the revolutionary party, meant the dissolution of social individuality within the "true" totality represented by the transparent consciousness of the party. This solution did not satisfy Goldmann for two reasons: (a) the identity of class and party, even when these two are very close, has not been proven. Even if Lukacs conceived of the party only as a *constitutive mediation*, as a means of achieving true consciousness rather than as an end in itself (thus escaping the hasty and frenetic attempts of certain critics to assimilate *History and Class Consciousness* to the future Stalinist phenomenon or to nascent totalitarianism), Goldmann rejected this absolute identity relation. Identity is always partial, and there is always the risk that one of the

*In August 1979, a colloquium organized by Goldmann's former collaborators was held in Cerisy, France, under the title of "Lukacs-Goldmann: Dialectics and the Human Sciences." It brought together 50 or 60 Goldmann scholars from throughout the world. The proceedings of this colloquium will be published in France sometime in 1982. Naïr is co-author, with Michael Löwy, of *Goldmann ou la Dialectique de la Totalit?* (Seghers, 1973), and is both a philosopher and political analyst. He has also co-edited a collective posthumous tribute to Goldmann: *Le Structuralisme génétique* (Denoël-Gonthier, 1977) and a collection of Goldmann's articles, *Epistémologie et philosophie politique* (Denoël-Gonthier, 1979). The English translation of this article is by Jim Cohen.

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poles will instrumentalize and dominate the other; (b) more fundamentally, the problem of the real *place* to be occupied by the individual in the community is left unresolved — as the Stalinist experience attests. Moreover, at this level, the superiority of the "socialist" experience over formal democracy is not clear.

In political philosophy, this double problem is posed as follows: how can the positive bourgeois heritage be *integrated* into dialectical thought? What is the meaning of a Marxist transcendence (*Aufhebung*) of bourgeois political philosophy? Bourgeois society is characterized by the opposition between the social individual and the community. Kant tackled this problem in his *Idea of a Universal History from the Cosmopolitical Viewpoint* by means of the category of the social-asocial individual.[1] The social-asocial character of the individual within the community gives rise to the *monadic* individual, and then to the individual as commodity, corresponding, by his very atomization, to an abstract and ideological community. The latter is not a true community of socialized beings, but a sum of beings who are at once opposed to and linked to each other — and whose social unity is made possible, according to Kant, by the categorical imperative of the Ought and the autonomy of the law. Hegel, on the other hand, more realistically located the social bond in the intervention of state rationality into a civil society governed by the principle of *bellum omnium contra omnes*. In any event, the community is seen as *external* to individual existence; the humanity of the person is not immanent to the person in bourgeois society. And if the community is an abstraction, then there must be a hypostasis of the atomized individual in the form of the *legal person* with rights and obligations. But far from realizing humanity in mankind, as Kant thought in his *Doctrine of Law*, this hypostasis merely allows the masking of the structural reality of capitalism. Rather than being the end of historical development, the individual is only a means. This is the very empirical reality which generates — above and beyond the production of personality as form and norm (see Kelsen) — the destruction of individuality as sociality. If capitalism produces the material-technical conditions for the liberation of the individual from Nature — precisely *because* it is based on the abstraction of individuals in the community (via the mediation of *abstract labor*) and the abstraction of the community-dimension in each individual (humanity as reality external to the subject) — it (capitalism) engenders an even greater individual *desocialization*.

It is interesting how Goldmann developed the problem from here. According to him, one of Kant's main contributions to dialectical philosophy resides in the famous *moral imperative*. But for Goldmann this imperative represents a condemnation of bourgeois society in which persons become means; it means that the supreme value of

1. "The means which nature employs to carry out the development of these dispositions is their *antagonism* within society, since this antagonism, in the final analysis, is the cause of a regular ordering of society. By antagonism, I mean here the *unsociable sociality* of men, that is, their inclination to enter into society — inclination that is, however, accompanied by a general repulsion to do so, which constantly threatens to disintegrate this society. Man has a penchant for association, for in such a state he feels more than a man by the development of his natural dispositions. But he also displays a great propensity to detach (or isolate) himself, for he also finds within himself the character of unsociability which stimulates him to want to move everything in his own direction; and as a result he expects to encounter resistance from all sides, just as he knows that he himself is inclined to resist others. It is this resistance that awakens all the forces of man and leads him to surmount his inclination to laziness, and under the impulse of association, the instinct of domination or greed, to establish a place for himself among his companions whom he tolerates with ill will but whom he cannot do without." Kant here is merely summarizing the idea of natural opposition between the individual and society in bourgeois political philosophy from Machiavelli to Rousseau — not to mention Locke and Spinoza.

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humanism resides in the fact that humanity is the person of each particular individual; and, finally, it means that the human being is the living *expression* of the community. This interpretation tends to force Kant's hand, i.e., it reduces the entire juridical dimension of Kantian thought to a radical humanist anthropology, whereas in reality this dimension supports what one might call his *humanist pessimism*. But all this is ultimately of little importance. What is interesting here is the political conclusion Goldmann draws from Kant: with respect to the conditions of the modern age, the dialectical overcoming of bourgeois by socialist society necessarily implies the overcoming of the monadic individual as atom and its corollary, the abstract community, through the realization of the concrete social community in which the individual person becomes its empirical expression. Conversely, social revolution does not imply negation of this individuality, but rather its concrete realization. For example, the rights of the person, which are formal in bourgeois society since individuals are materially unequal, must be maintained and must become, within the context of material equality under socialism, real rights. That was Goldmann's position in 1948. What could be more contemporary?

György Markus has shown how Goldmann opposed Lukacs on this point: for the author of *History and Class Consciousness*, the Kantian ethic, thus conceived, is formal; for Goldmann, it is not a formal problem but indeed a real contribution to socialist thought.

Here then is Goldmann's major politico-philosophical thesis: *the passage to socialism signifies the development of the individual as a social person in the human community*; the humanization of individuals, the extension of their rights, are the conditions *sine qua non* for constituting the social community. But if the coming of the social community is predicated through the socialist revolution, one must also guard against leaving the individual by the wayside. It would be easy to point out the limits of such an approach. One could emphasize, for example, that in his analysis of Kant, Goldmann does not propose a theory of the individual socialization. But what counted for Goldmann in 1948 was to defend this thesis and show its fundamental compatibility with Marxism, as opposed to Stalinism.

This leads to the problem of the revolutionary subject. The solution is conditioned by what Goldmann calls the problem of the *universality* of the class. Here is how the web is spun: if concrete individuality, that is, the individual's liberating socialization, is linked to the rise of the community, then only the class having the capacity, by its position in the relations of production, to universalize the condition of concrete humanity by universalizing its own conditions, can play this role. This class is the proletariat whose extreme dehumanization under capitalism requires it to call for both the humanization of society, in opposition to its own suffering, and the universalization of this humanization, as a characteristic of its own historical situation — if it is indeed true that the proletariat, the first and only such class in history, does not need to exploit any other class in order to exist.

Such a problematic, of course, is rooted in the young Lukacs and the young Marx. In all of his texts prior to 1958, Goldmann supported this thesis for reasons having as much to do with methodology as with political theory. He did not accept the identity of the party and the class, for this thesis is not only based on the *certainty* of the proletariat's historical mission but also on the identity between this mission and that of the party. Furthermore, Goldmann did not believe in the certainty of this mission, and here he broke with Lukacs. Furthermore, here is where Pascal's wager comes into play.

Goldmann apparently introduced Pascal's wager to assure the internal coherence of

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his thought so that the thesis of the proletariat as the revolutionary subject may become not only a methodological guarantee, but a philosophical foundation. But what was the role of the wager in Goldmann's thought?

First, it had an epistemological function. Although in the human sciences there is no certain scientific knowledge, the viewpoint of the totality arising out of the proletariat's class position does allow a greater mastery over the subject-object dialectic and, hence, a fuller knowledge of the object.

Next, it had a function in political theory. To bet on the proletariat is not to bet on the future as such, but on the possibility of a different future, *sui generis*. It also means a revolt against both the economistic and deterministic Marxism of German social-democracy, according to which the social revolution was an inevitable historical result, and against voluntaristic subjectivism — from which Lukacs is not entirely exempt — in which revolution depends on the omnipotence of a self-proclaimed, conscious, directing vanguard.

Finally, it had a conjunctural function, for with respect to the Stalinism which was then dominant, to wager on the class against existing parties meant upholding Marxism without pledging allegiance to the organizations pretending to represent it.

If things seem clear in philosophy, the same is not true for politics. If Goldmann elaborated a political philosophy, this does not mean that he was a man of politics in the Platonic sense of the term. For he refused to draw all the political consequences from his theoretical theses. There were two reasons for this. First, although he distinguished between class and party, he nonetheless maintained that Lenin was right, against Trotsky and Luxemburg, in defining the working class as spontaneously reformist and non-revolutionary. Secondly, although he implicitly recognized the necessity of an organizational mediation in the proletariat's struggle, this recognition was not linked to a theoretical reflection as to the nature of the necessary organization. If Goldmann challenged the Leninist model, he did not propose a substitute for it. This, however, was not only Goldmann's failing, but that of his era.

This entire framework was overturned in 1958. If, with the rise of Gaullism in France, Goldmann discovered certain new realities, it was at the expense of his initial schema. These new realities upset his political conceptions (in particular, the theory of the proletariat). They came, however, at the price of a 10-year silence (from 1958 to 1968) regarding the philosophical *foundations* of his politics. And it was precisely when he attempted, toward 1969-1970, to bring his new political conceptions into harmony with his philosophical categories that he was able to evaluate his new dilemma.

For Goldmann, the rise of Gaullism meant the beginning of a new form of economic organization. The old competitive liberalism, and its uncontrollable conflicts between the state and the economy was replaced by political intervention in the economy. The Gaullist state inaugurated organized capitalism, based on the rationalization of economic activity and the relative integration of antagonistic forces through popular consensus. Following some Italian New Left thinkers (notably Bruno Trentin), André Gorz and Serge Mallet argued that the rationalization mechanism of capitalism (or neo-capitalism) brings about two main contradictory effects with respect to class structure. First, the gradual disappearance of the old proletariat employed in obsolete industries is destined to suffer the blows of modernization — hence, the inability of this proletariat to put forward demands other than quantitative ones. The trade union effect plays a determining role here, for working class potentialities are channeled into the riverbed of gradualism and bookkeeping exercises regarding the cost of living and

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the dialectics of wage increases. The organization of work, social time, life itself, are forgotten. Second, the emergence of new wage-earning middle layers — Mallet's "new working class" (technicians, public sector employees, etc.) — destined by the evolution of the economy to grow in number, are bearers of new and original strategic potentials, since their demands may become qualitative in nature and non-integratable by capitalism. Thus, there is a displacement of the revolutionary subject. Furthermore, Goldmann added, the revolution must be redefined with respect to its class structure (it will *not* be a proletarian revolution) and its form (it will *not* be a violent seizure of political power).

Goldmann threw himself on this problematic with a veritable theoretical zeal. If this "new" working class is a carrier of qualitative demands, bearing on the quality of life, the organization and duration of work, participation in management and decision-making in firms, etc., it cannot recognize its social interests in the classical socialist project of state-planned organization of the economy, but rather in a new form of economic organization from below — a form that the Yugoslavs were the first to experiment with, i.e., self-management.

To understand the novelty and originality of Goldmann's thought, it is essential to emphasize that, for him, self-management became both a model of social organization and an instrument of transition to socialism. Social revolution as prior mastery over state-political power, followed by the transformation of society, is no longer possible because of the integration of the proletariat. The rise in wages accompanying the new phase of Western capitalism effaces qualitative demands and inaugurates a struggle for the quality of life. The resulting strategy is based on the expectation of progressive social gains within the existing society, not unlike the bourgeois clubs in feudal society. Thus, the market economy is maintained and the struggle for the transformation of consciousness begins.

This problematic raises some major questions. Today it is all too easy to locate its limits. But even when originally advanced, this problematic did not seem altogether acceptable. It would be useless to deny the social realities to which Goldmann referred, but they could be interpreted in other ways. First of all, the phenomenon of the new wage-earning strata reflected the broadening of the traditional working class rather than the appearance of a new class. It was optimistic, if not illusory, to prophesy the disappearance of quantitative demands, if only as a structural phenomenon of capitalism. Such an illusion arose from the relative stability of the productive cycle of capital and the (temporarily) balanced relation between this cycle and the consumer sector. This period of stability followed the redistribution of the international division of labor under conditions extremely favorable to capital. Yet, even during this period, the strategy of capital involved a protection of the average rate of profit via the substitution of a super-exploited immigrant proletariat for the classical proletariat, while opening up the service sector to young people — especially women.

Finally, the thesis of the progressive taking of power and the struggle for a new consciousness underestimates or assumes the resolution of certain major theoretical problems: it neglects that capitalism not only produces surplus value and commodities, but also social relations based on capital, with "the capitalist on one side, the wage-worker on the other." This reproduction of capitalist social relations is a barrier to any evolutionary theory of social transformation. It implies, rather, that any such transformation is inconceivable without a crisis of the process of social self-reproduction. From a strictly logical viewpoint, the maintenance of the market is

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incompatible with this. That is why the struggle for consciousness, the conquest of hegemony (Goldmann was strongly influenced by Gramsci) turns out to be extremely tough — for the enduring forms of consciousness are not independent of social and politico-ideological relations within which they are produced.

But it would be wrong to imagine that Goldmann was deaf to such arguments. In what remains his theoretical testament, the preface to *Marxisme et Sciences humaines*, written in 1970, he recalled that his analyses between the years 1958 and 1968 appear both true and one-sided. If he persisted, in this text, in according a strategic importance to the new working class in the transformation process, and if he stressed the central importance of the struggle for consciousness, he also noted the limits of such an approach as regards the type of transformation to follow. "It is not to be excluded," he wrote, "that a radical evolution toward modernization might generate, in its wake, a conflict between a privileged minority of producers and the masses on whom this minority has relied to realize its aspirations, but whom it later tries to eliminate from production and management, and whose influence it seeks to do away with." In other words, rupture and violence remain in the heart of modern society. To this theoretical rectification, I shall add a second, which I heard directly from Goldmann's mouth during a discussion in September 1970. He was discussing the universality of the *Weltanschauung* of the new working class. Could this class organize the whole of society according to its aspirations? He did not ask: "Does it want to?" but "Does it have the capacity?" It had to be admitted, he remarked, that the answer was negative. This class was not a bearer of full human emancipation because it was unable to lift itself beyond its own interests — even if they were qualitatively superior to those of all other classes.

It is symptomatic that Goldmann points to the limits of his political thought of the 1960s by referring to the philosophical category of universality. This reflects a malaise: after the 1968 explosion, in questioning the logical coherence of his political theses, Goldmann perceived that they had not attained the same lofty heights that his philosophical conception of the world had attained. There was a turning back of the philosophical toward the political, in which the former marked the limits of the latter.

Before many others and more clearly, Goldmann spotted at least two major tendencies of this new period. First, if self-management played such a decisive role in his writings, it was because this idea introduced new areas into modern society. It was not merely an economic program, but a political one radically opposed to the existing world. Did it not claim to modify the very body of power by breaking with the distinction and separation between civil society and political society, egoistic life and social life? For if self-management meant the organization of production by workers, this required that power no longer be conceived as a separate sphere of command, opposed to the producers' real will. If, as Marx postulated in the *1844 Manuscripts*, the great contribution of Hegel to philosophy lies in the thesis that man, the social subject, produces himself by producing — i.e., that man is work — then the self-management project grows from the very roots of this determination because it poses the problem of the production of the social subject (man) by man himself. Is it not an elementary truth, so evident as to be blinding, that the only work experienced up to now has been a form of relation to materiality and contingency arising out of coercive and oppressive social relations? If the social subject becomes human only with "the development of his non-organic nature," i.e., his being as culture, knowledge and wisdom, and not only material needs (which supposes that these latter be satisfied), then the self-management project — because of the struggle it implies against work

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time and dehumanization, by the reduction it postulates of the separation betewen manual and intellectual work — is at the very heart of this conquest of humanity by man.

Secondly, and without accepting the Goldmannian thesis regarding "progressive" social gains, from this angle he touched on a crucial problem. If social transformation is to be real and consciously sought, it is inconceivable other than via the winning of cultural and political hegemony by all the laboring classes of society: such is the main lesson derived from the abortive experiences of "socialism." Political hegemony is thus revealed to be insufficient. Its conquest can be realized only in correlation with sustained efforts in culture, as world view and the full range of social practices. The forging of a new model of social organization, radically different from capitalism and bureaucratic societies, must arise out of the experiences of working people themselves. This is tantamount to saying that the self-management project, if it fails to recognize itself in anything that exists and if it affirms its strength in the depth of popular potentialities, must also provoke a crisis in the bourgeois model of politics, which the working class parties have not succeeded in transforming. If in this context politics is synonymous with power, and if it embodies the techniques of manipulation of social subjects by those sectors which control society, then the strategy of political and cultural hegemony around a self-management project will involve unmasking these ruses of power. The very fact that Goldmann's thought, through its constant intermingling of the philosophical with the political, invites us to reflect on such questions explains why it speaks to us and the problems of our future.

TWO MODELS IN PORTUGUESE AGRARIAN REFORM: CENTRALISM AND SELF-MANAGEMENT

by José Baptista

In view of the general offensive against agrarian reform cooperatives being launched by the rightist government, it may seem inopportune to underscore the differences among cooperatives. Given the urgent need to close ranks, it would seem more logical to consider them in terms of a homogeneous model. But that makes sense only at first glance. The analysis of the fundamental models for agricultural cooperatives is equally urgent precisely because its effects will be to reinforce their defense. In the last six years, Portuguese experience seems to show that agrarian reforms offer only one alternative: that of the Portuguese Communist Party. Circumstances have imposed a Manichean view: either one favors "the PCP agrarian reform" or one supports the agrarian counter-reform. One of the factors behind this situation is the inability of other organized political forces to elaborate clear alternatives. Thus we are witnessing a polarization where the two extremes are described as *latifundiary caciquism* versus Communist despotism. A very large part of the Portuguese population thus feels wedged in between two options that are of absolutely no concern to them. So they remain apathetic and confused, or arbitrarily side with one or the other of these strategies.

Within agrarian reform, there is not one, but two models. The recognition of the second model, its elaboration and development, could break the monopoly of the first. [1]

1. Incidentally, an analysis of the agrarian counter-reform is equally necessary. The capitalist model (dynamic, aiming toward increased productivity) stands in contradiction to the latifundary

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Thus, it is not inopportune to emphasize the differences between the two basic models of cooperatives born with agrarian reform — models that in the future could give rise to radically different forms of cooperative systems. We will call them the centralized and the self-management models. Two typical cases of agricultural cooperatives in Alentejo will serve as a basis for elaborating these models.

The Centralized Model. Its current form has been stamped by a centralizing tendency since its inception. Its formation was based on the occupation of several agricultural properties, merged into a single cooperative (in the case in question it was a matter of a half-dozen properties with a total area of about 10,000 hectares). Why weren't a half-dozen cooperatives formed based on that same number of existing properties, for instance, by organizing those who were already working them and who had known one another for a long time, just as they knew those farms? A typical reply is, "Because they saw that this way they could defend themselves better." Here "defense" is understood in the economic rather than the political sense. The director of a political party that supports the centralized model once explained the need for the large, non-decentralized organization in exclusively technical terms: "In Alentejo agriculture is extensive; the small cooperative cannot be seen there, nor even the federation of little cooperatives you were talking about." Obviously, 100 large organizations each controlled by a stable management can be controlled more easily than 200 to 500 small organizations with rotating managements.

The main subdivisions into which the centralized model can be broken down were not formed on the basis of human communities (endowed with a minimum of cohesion and stability, e.g., hamlets, groups of wage workers, groups of workers formed by mutual choice among them, etc). Nor are they *creative of* human communities, since workers have no regular tie with these subdivisions. In this case, for example, 100,000 hectares are subdivided into three sections corresponding to three communes. The sections are essentially divided by the cooperative's central administration. Each division is headed by a three-member committee, not elected by the members of the section but by the entire 500 workers in the cooperative. There are no general meetings of the sections; instead, sections' committees meet once a week with the directors of the whole cooperative. The members of the section committees are not elected to represent anyone, but to exercise a function: one is responsible for cattle, another for machines, a third for work in the fields. If a particular task requires a certain number of persons, then a certain number of workers is randomly selected from any commune to do it, "since the cooperative is just one," we are told. The only existing bond is that of the 500 workers to 10,000 hectares — to a single cooperative which is the basic unity.

Besides the section committees, there is the committee of directors elected each year, each member of which has his task: office, machines, cattle, etc. Contrary to the self-management model (comprised of small human communities which manage themselves in rotation) in the centralized model the directorship does not rotate. In the present case, the ten members of the central directorship in office during the founding of the cooperative (1974) are also the current (1980) directors. Rotation is not a goal, since it does not conform to the logic of the centralized model. To manage 10,000 hectares with 500 people is not easy — even for a dynamic management with good intentions. It is

model (large privately owned estates which are immobile, oriented toward the exploitation of cheap manual labor). Contrary to popular assumptions, these two models do not constitute an amalgam, and their contradictions ought to be used in defense of agricultural cooperatives. If this had been recognized, for example, during the occupation of farms and the implementation of the agrarian reform, the cooperative agricultural sector would not have half as many enemies as it does now.

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improbable that the 490 workers who carry out their everyday duties without a broad view of the whole would acquire common management capabilities for a complex centralized management, or would even consider themselves able to do it. With time, management accumulates organizing know-how, which becomes even more important now that the right is on the attack and the government provides no support; moreover, since there are "reserves" (old latifundists, owners of large estates now receiving the better portions — a "reserve" — of the income from their ancient properties), the economic survival of many cooperatives has become impossible.

It must not be concluded that the directors are rascals, tyrants, or extremely dishonest; in fact, they are dedicated, serious, and do their best. Currently, even the most centralized model of cooperative is more democratic and moral than the most decentralized private enterprise. However, the centralized model cannot allow itself the luxury of egalitarianism. It needs competent people to manage a large and complicated centralized operation. "Here we have salary differences, and we must have them. Some persons are specialists at a particular job and should receive a higher salary, and there are others who cannot receive this salary." But today the differences are less than those of the most egalitarian cooperatives in the urban and industrialized sectors.[2] However, even in the cooperative, salary differences translate not only into differences in purchasing power, but also in prestige and social status.

Current agricultural cooperatives on the centralized model are still in their heroic phase, and the distance between the directors and the other members is minimal. As in all cooperatives, the first waves of directors are the most qualified and active. The heroic moments they are still experiencing — mobilization for their ideas of sharing and against an abominable past as well as the newly acquired dignity — not only unify them but also give the directors a program charged with democratic intentions and good will toward those who are under their supervision.

But in a more remote future, the concentration of decisions and management capacity in a more specialized group as well as the concentration of passiveness and indifference in the majority will tend to develop into a situation of inequality. It is already being expressed by the most powerless workers, who say, 'Those in management are the new bosses." It is a situation in which socio-cultural divisions are increasing, opposing interests are developing, and a system is being reproduced in which the competent manage and know how to manage, and the incompetent carry out orders because they do not know how to manage nor can they collectively learn to do so. The rank and file can participate only in questions of detail since, with more input, they might impair the "rationality" of management and thus lower their own standard of living, which is in no one's interest. Thus, the circle closes, and it becomes difficult to distinguish structurally the large cooperative from the large private agricultural enterprise, with its proprietor and his "specialists" who manage it, and the wage earners who carry out orders. Although it is a control mechanism, whether or not management is elected does not solve the problem that only a very few are eligible, since very few are competent and incompetence leads to bankruptcy. Thus, in addition to the direct threat from agrarian counter-reform and corruptive outside pressures, the relatively democratic system of the present-day centralized cooperative is equally threatened from within by its own general bureaucratization.

2. The members of management earn the same wages as the most competent category, that of tractor operators, i.e., 7,500 escudos. The unspecialized worker earns 6,200 escudos. Those who earn the most (8,200 escudos) are the livestock tenders, because they have a job with great responsibility. "Although the syndicate defends equal pay for equal work" in principle, women do lighter work and consequently are paid only 5,900.

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The Self-Management Model. This model is distinguished from the centralized one not only by its decentralization, but by a different overall structure with different dynamics of development.[3] At its origin, this model was less conditioned by centralizing politics and ideology and was able to follow more spontaneous models of organization in conforming to the latent aspirations of all workers. The case under analysis occupies several properties, with the establishment of a cooperative (averaging 800 hectares) on each, rather than merging them into one large, homogenized cooperative. While maintaining the autonomy of each cooperative, the self-management model tries to federate them into a common project of united productive forces — both material and human. Obviously, this unity is more fragile than that achieved from above in the centralized model, since the starting point is a number of small autonomous cooperatives. The difficulties that affect all cooperatives are multiplied in the constitution of a federation of small cooperatives. And, added to this is the political and ideological isolation of the self-management project, which is itself diffused and indefinite. The word "self-management" itself is a vague term that most commonly concerns urban workers and enterprises. It is usually simply an unstable juridical state, neither a model nor a project. Although the centralized cooperative currently has a greater concentration of productive forces, the self-management model already has a much greater socialization of productive forces.

The case under analysis here is composed of a dozen cooperatives each with 20 workers in 12 communities. The people know one another, work together, associate and communicate every day. They know the 800 hectares from which they derive their sustenance; they identify with the land they cultivate, and understand it; this parcel of nature with which they are in daily communication is their point of honor and their calling card. The union of man with nature and work is more complete and richer than that of the isolated producer-owner, because it is at the same time a concrete union with others, rather than an abstract exchange relation. Compared to the centralized model, the identification with work is greater and there even is a healthy competition among the small cooperatives, translating into a greater total productive dynamics.

Within each community the wages and the treatment are equal for all the men; women receive a little less. Some groups are better managed than others, and work with more or less intensity; there also are differences in the land's productivity. The average pay is 7,000 escudos, but there are some cooperatives where the people receive 6,000 scudos and others where the pay is 8,000. Here one's occupation does not determine wages, an egalitarianism that would be nearly impossible in an industrial coop.

Each community elects a five-member executive committee, e.g., twenty people elect five. All twenty meet once or twice a week. Of course, "meet" here is almost a figure of speech; since they constantly are together in their work and living conditions, they are, so to speak, in permanent session. The principle of rotation is fundamental. It is planned that at least half of the committee is changed each year. The less experienced are aided by the others in the committee. The idea is for everyone to have a turn on the committee, and this is accomplished in a short time. This rotation has several objectives: all serve a management apprenticeship so that they will be capable and experienced; the community is more cohesive since all are aware of management difficulties and will be slower to criticize the committee; it is the most effective way to

3. Because of the ideological models that have conditioned the Portuguese agrarian reform, the cooperatives whose practice comes closest to the self-management model are few, weaker and more diffused. Here we must stress that, in any case, the models we are trying to depict are above all *ideal types*. In practice, however, though some cooperatives are clearly closer to one model or the other, all have concrete elements of both.

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avoid division within the group, i.e., a situation where a few accumulate experience and information while the others gain in ignorance and passivity; it avoids arrogance among the managers and resentment by the others who would come to regard them as "new bosses"; it avoids the demoralization resulting from a division of prestige, influence, authority and even wealth. Thus, this model's structure gives it a dynamic that makes these efforts *viable*, contrary to the centralized model which would doom such efforts to failure, if they even existed. Finally, the self-management model is not only an alternative for agrarian reform but it is also a road toward the rediscovery of an integral human being, which has been completely fragmented by contemporary civilization.

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Reviews:

Ulf Wolter. *Rudolf Bahro: Critical Responses.* White Plains, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 1980. 237 pages.

Western Marxism [1] — Merleau-Ponty's name for a post-social-democratic, post-Bolshevik, primarily philosophical tradition of Marx-interpretation in Europe and America — makes sense only in terms of the double background of a successful Marxian revolution in the East and the corresponding "Eastern" Marxist theoretical and philosophical synthesis. But, as Bloch put it, "The Russians ... act philosophically, but philosophize like mad dogs." [2] Initially a philosophical justification of the October Revolution whose Eastern self-understanding did not meet either West European theoretical criteria or political needs, Western Marxism has become a critical theory of *all* contemporary forms of domination including those practiced by Soviet-type societies. Since the 1960s, various trends of Western Marxism have become an important, oppositional intellectual stream also in Eastern Europe — first under the rather nonsensical name of "revisionism" and later under that of the more exact but lesser known term "philosophy of praxis." In the 1970s — in Yugoslavia earlier — Western Marxism in Eastern Europe began to yield a series of theoretical analyses of "really existing socialism." Of these, Bahro's work, *The Alternative*, is not only the best known, but also the most extensive and synthetic.[3] Yet among works of this type,[4] Bahro is the least able to provide a genuinely critical theory of his form of society.

Thus, a translation of critical responses to Bahro's book is a welcome addition to the existing literature on the subject in English. [5] It is now possible not only to consider Bahro's contribution to the study of authoritarian state socialism, but also the limits of Western Marxism through the distorted mirror of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. For in spite of his pedantic, scholastic style reminiscent of Diamat and Histomat, Bahro *is* a Western Marxist. His stress on the subjective factor, the historical subject of social transformation as well as his concept of social objectivity as reification, comes from Lukacs (perhaps mediated through Goldmann). His conception of the active role of consciousness at times reversing the so-called materialist premise is reminiscent of the early Korsch. He explicitly draws upon Gramsci for a theory of intellectuals and the role of the party as the collective intellectual, i.e., to achieve cultural hegemony. He adopts the Marcusian theory of true and false needs culminating in a vision of emancipation as the reconciliation between culture and nature; his contempt for "repressive tolerance" comes from Marcuse as well. He draws his idea of cultural revolution from Westernized Maoist models (first stage) and from Marcuse and Reich (second stage). He utilizes the results of new working class theories. He even hazards some vague references to Habermas'

1. M. Merleau-Ponty, *The Adventures of the Dialectic* (Evanston, 1973); P. Anderson, *Considerations on Western Marxism* (London, 1976); A. Arato and P. Breines, *The Young Lukacs and the Origins of Western Marxism* (New York, 1979).

2. E. Bloch, "Aktualität und Utopie: Zu Lukacs *Geschichte und Klassenbewusstsein*" (1923), in *Philosophische Aufsätze* (Frankfurt, 1969), pp. 598-600.

3. Rudolf Bahro, *The Alternative in Eastern Europe* (London, 1979).

4. Cf. among other works, J. Kuron and K. Modzelewski, *Monopolsozialismus* (Hamburg, 1969); M. Rakovski, *Toward an East European Marxism* (London, 1978); G. Konrad, I. Szelenyi, *The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power* (New York, 1979); S. Stojanovic, *Between Ideal and Reality* (New York, 1970).

5. Further references to this volume will appear in the text with page numbers in parentheses.

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model of an emancipated public sphere based on communication free of domination. Finally he seems to be familiar with some of the results of the most up-to-date Marxology. In short, he fully earns Marcuse's praise (p. 25) as the author of "the most important contribution to Marxist theory and practice to appear in several decades." The only problem is that Mandel has referred to *The Alternative* in only slightly less complimentary fashion as "the most important theoretical work to come out of the countries which have abolished capitalism since Leon Trotsky's *Revolution Betrayed.*" Why a problem? Because Trotskyism has always been "only" the most sophisticated version of *Eastern* Marxism.[6]

Both Marcuse and Mandel are right to claim Bahro. In the face of authoritarian state socialism, the theory of cultural revolution that emerged in the 1960s as one of the three main self-interpretations of the New Left (the others being participatory democracy and "third worldism") turns out to be a version of Eastern Marxism, when its link to theories of radical democracy is vitiated by an implicit Marxist orthodoxy. The problem is not the survival of "Eastern" elements in an otherwise "Western" work. The elements we may recognize as Eastern themselves belong to the Left Communist tradition of the 1920s. As far as the most questionable of these go, i.e., Bahro's defense of a single party system, it is paradoxically Mandel (who also would like to be a practical European politician) rather than Marcuse (who could afford to be more consistent) who finds them suspicious. Indeed, the latter dramatically and aggressively defends the theoretical supports of just such authoritarian features, in particular the distinction between immediate and real interests and a dictatorial relation of the plan to the development of needs. Thus, it is impossible to neatly separate out the emancipatory (Western) and authoritarian (Eastern) features of Bahro's work. The opposition between his willingness to undertake a critique of all his classical sources including Marx, Engels and Lenin (*a sine qua non* of Western Marxism) and his desire to present the Soviet ("non-capitalist") road to industrial society as on the whole progressive is only apparent. The fundamental charge against Marx and Lenin is that they did not fully understand, or at least admit, the necessary shift of the theater of world revolution to the East and the need for an authoritarian, statist, bureaucratic formation *sui generis,* produced by an intellectual vanguard rather than the proletariat, as the preparation of the industrial but non-capitalist foundations for a future socialist social formation.

There is an important set of antinomies in Bahro's book, but it has nothing to do with Western vs. Eastern Marxism. His antinomies have another source: the opposition of what he deduces from his synthesis and what he is presented with as historical clues by contemporary struggles for liberation in his part of the world. Many of these primarily political antinomies are worth listing. At times Bahro considers political democratization (in the sense of formal democracy) in East Europe as a step backward toward "political restoration," and at times as a necessary if small step forward — the presupposition of other steps. The struggle for civil and human rights he sees alternately as the crucial recovery of what should be realized and preserved under all forms of socialism and as the concentration of the movement on something inessential. The achievement of a relatively free public and cultural sphere is the foundation of all that is to follow but it also expresses the suspicious, corporate, immediate interests of intellectuals who seek to shine amidst repressive tolerance. The national dimension of the opposition he sees variously as fully justified, as justified but

6. Cf. F. Feher's review of Arato and Breines, *The Young Lukacs and the Origins of Western Marxism,* forthcoming in *New German Critique.*

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backward looking, and as backward looking and dangerous. Correspondingly, he understands the stabilizing functions (for Russia) of the imperial structure of the whole, and yet uses its partial survival as a bargaining point with the existing parties (who are threatened with the eventual collapse of the whole system of states). He attacks the monolithic aspects of the existing system, but seeks to split the ruling parties only temporarily. Essentially he also wants a single party system, but on the basis of a renewed party — a league of communists. At times he points to free trade unions as a necessary and even paradigmatic element of plurality in a single party system, but at least in one crucial place, [7] he argues that the desire to "restore" free and independent unions is merely a confirmation of the subaltern role of wage workers in bureaucratic socialism. He proposes a system of dual power between state and society, but he insists on a unified center of ideological hegemony for both state and society, again his reformed communist party. He accepts the necessity of economic decentralization but he continues to assign all really fundamental choices to the central plan. He sees how the old party has instrumentalized the old plan with its particular interest in maintaining power, but he proposes the same structural relation with a new single party and a new plan, without any serious control mechanisms or even informational devices from below. Finally, in a manner similar to Szelenyi, Konrad and Gouldner, he calls to account the vanguard party intellectuals of the original revolution for masking the particular interests they managed to impose as general, but ingeniously claims that the new, collective intellectual needed to guide the transformation to socialism would, and could, suppress its own particularity. Indeed, when he claims that this particularity consists in the interest in unlimited and uncensored forms of public expression, he manages to distinguish his "alternative" from a society in which intellectuals as such constitute a ruling class, but not from the contemporary societies of Eastern Europe.[8]

It should not be very difficult, especially after the Polish summer of 1980, to distinguish the strand in Bahro's antinomies that expresses the practice and the theory of the "really existing" East European opposition. What, of course, needs to be explained is why in each instance he is also committed to the contrary, to something authoritarian and conservative. Bahro is the only theorist who *both* fully demystifies Bolshevik ideology, seeing the continuity between Leninism and Stalinism, and accepts the necessity not only of the authoritarian turn of the October Revolution but also of the Stalinist revolution from above. He furthermore maintains the necessity and legitimacy of a neo-Leninist political strategy for the present. While his apology *vis-à-vis* classical Leninism is the consequence of his acceptance of the Eastern Marxist theory of the shift of the world context of anti-capitalist revolution, his neo-Leninism

8. Thus Szelenyi's critique of Bahro is right, but for the wrong reason. Cf. "Whose Alternative?" in *New German Critique*, n. 19 (Spring-Summer, 1980). Szelenyi could defend himself against this criticism by saying that only in the liberal societies of the self-regulating market is the interest of intellectuals definable in terms of free publicity and culture, while in the state socialist societies participation in "rational redistribution" on the political technical or ideological level replaces this. Nevertheless, even this argument would indicate that the October revolution was carried out in the name of the historical interest of intellectuals against their immediate empirical interests. Existing intellectuals would therefore be in the same position *vis à vis* the revolution as the existing workers. Should we, therefore, believe that the historical interests of one of these were *really* represented by the vanguard? The role of intellectuals in opposition to the existing systems from the 1920s to today certainly speaks against such a claim. It is Bahro who seems to be right here — the intellectuals do preserve an interest in free publicity and culture also under state socialism. Only, it is not *just their* interest — as workers from Budapest to Gdansk have repeatedly shown.

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follows from his acceptance and interpretation of the Western Marxist theory of cultural revolution.

The application of the theory of the Asiatic mode of production *cum* Oriental despotism to Russia, though anticipated by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Plekhanov, is classically Western Marxist in its conceptual strategy. Using the best in Marx [9] against determinist and unilinear versions of Marxism, interpreters from Wittfogel to Dutschke were able to greatly relativize the schematic, evolutionary model of historical materialism accepted by all the movements from Social Democracy to Maoism. Surpassing the original theorists of Western Marxism (Lukacs, Bloch, Korsch) who could be collectively called the philosophers of the October Revolution, the theorists of the Asiatic mode of production sought to specify the historically unique characteristics of the new antagonistic society the Bolsheviks set up: in their view neither capitalist, socialist or even transitional between the two. In this tradition (in spite of his totally uncharitable and unreasonable attitude toward Wittfogel) Bahro uses the theory of the Asiatic mode of production as a building block of his theory of history in general, and in particular as the key to his understanding of the Soviet Union as a form of industrial despotism representing the modernization of agricultural (Oriental) despotism. The structure of Soviet history (and, rather strangely, of East European history as well) is here grasped as that of a non-capitalist road to industrial society — one that has up till now been able to produce only a new form of antagonistic society (form of domination) *sui generis*. Bahro rejects the Trotskyist notions (degeneration of the workers' state and bureaucratic counterrevolution) used to sustain the conceptually and historically implausible and implicitly apologetic idea that the Soviet Union is somehow a transitional mix between capitalism and socialism.

Given this start, it is astonishing that, in the political-ethical sense, Bahro regresses behind the intent of the Trotskyist formula, coming up with a model this time openly apologetic of Stalinism. His criticism of the idea of partial degeneration is not motivated by a more critical stance toward the Leninist (and Trotskyist) origins of Stalinism, but by a clearly more affirmative relation to the Stalinst formation of the Soviet Union. Bahro believes that the socialist ideology of Leninist intellectuals was from the beginning only the false consciousness of an elite — so far so good, but now the disaster — "called upon" to lead a very different process that is historically necessary and unavoidable: an authoritarian, bureaucratic, modernizing revolution from above. Reopening the door to extreme determinism, [10] of Stalinism he considers

9. A remarkable (and convincing) critique of this concept in Marx and others is in P. Anderson, *The Lineages of the Absolutist State* (London, 1974), doubly remarkable because of the depth of its analysis and learning but also because the results are used to reintegrate Russia within a single model of European development required by the Trotskyist apologetics of the October Revolution. To justify the continuity of the October Revolution with European socialist traditions, the permanent revolution must begin in Europe, even if in an underdeveloped part of it. But if, as Anderson rightly believes, one must separate the historical lineage of Turkey from China because of the inability of *any* concept of Asiatic mode of Production to contain both, should we not separate the lineages of England and France from that of Russia because of entirely analogous difficulties with the overblown Marxian concept of feudalism that he relies on, in spite of his excellent sources in non-Marxist historiography?

10. If a multilinear one. Bahro's conception of history — in spite of the use of the Asiatic model - is that of orthodox historical materialism. His biological analogies, his use of the economistic model of the dynamic of forces and relations of production, his attachment to the famous womb metaphor which he rechristens as the larva stage, all point in this direction. The multilinear adjustment lies in his insistence that a new historical stage follows from a previously less developed line. It is in this form that the idea of transitional society creeps back into his analysis.

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bypassable only the most outrageously terroristic features — and at times not even these.[11] He never seems to tire of repeating (deliberately echoing Marx's views concerning the merits of capitalism) that the Stalinist period of forced industrialization and collectivization was fundamentally creative and progressive both on a world historical scale and in the context of Russian history. To be sure, his arguments are (unfortunately) familiar to Western readers. Bahro's interpretation of Stalinism is to be located somewhere between Dobb and Deutscher who, of course, had little use for the concept of the Asiatic mode of production.

And yet, it is only half right to claim, with Hassan Givsan (pp. 79ff), that Bahro's analysis of Soviet development could have been made without relying on the Asiatic model altogether, locating early Soviet history in a world capitalist context marked by the relation of developed and dependent milieux. Half right, because the model has different consequences on the *diachronic* and *synchronic* levels. On the level of historical explanation, the concept of the Asiatic mode of production is rather superfluous because Bahro clearly reinterprets it in terms of *the* classical Eastern Marxist doctrine (connected to the names of Parvus, Trotsky, Lenin and Mao) of the historical change of the locus of world revolution to the East. Thus, agricultural despotism is, however implausibly, simply a synonym for underdevelopment. In this context, instead of indicating either a historical dead end or, better still, the emergence of an open-ended evolutionary line that for no immanent reason leads to anything like socialism — which is, after all, the conceptual child of Western civil society — Bahro maintains that the outcome of the only possible non-capitalist road to industrial society, "industrial despotism," will necessarily put the Marxian model of socialism (indeed, a rightly utopian variant), increasingly impossible in an Eurocentric and privileged West, back on the agenda. Bahro's revolution is also "permanent," even if it takes far longer than originally expected. It is therefore not surprising that he returns *sub rosa* to the notion of the transitional society — to be sure not a degenerate or deformed one.[12] His *industrial despotism* is transitional — but between Asiatic, agricultural *despotism* and *industrial* socialism. It leads to socialism for classical reasons, the "protosocialist" nature of industrial despotism consisting in two half-way steps to socialization: étatization ("socialization in an alienated form") and the reduction of social antagonism (ultimately based on the hierarchical division of labor) to its pure, quasi-classless form of the state against society. What separates the developed versions of Bahro's industrial despotism from socialism is therefore only the self-perpetuating, authoritarian, bureaucratic state, a view analogous to that of Engels' (in *Anti-Dühring*) concerning the supposedly last, statist phase of capitalist development today enshrined in the state monopoly capitalism thesis of some of the European communist parties, including the SED.

Nevertheless, it is in this context, on the level of structural analysis, that the model of the Asiatic mode of production really yields something that the orthodox historical materialist models had to do without: the statist principle of organization of an antagonistic system in which neither property or any other economic criterion is the fundamental clue to social structure. Thus, Bahro fruitfully refers to those (he thinks all) Asiatic empires where the political-bureaucratic structure defined and perpetuated a form of domination without private powers of disposal over agricultural

11. Bahro, *The Alternative, op.cit.*, p. 90.

12. Noticing the contradictions, in an article summarizing *The Alternative* (*New Left Review*, November-December, 1977, hereafter: *Lecture*), he adds that late capitalism is also a society transitional to socialism, presumably because of its own étatistic features.

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property. One may of course legitimately ask, with Lombardo-Radice (pp. 143-144) for party political (PCI) reasons, whether the argument should represent a genuine historical lineage or only an analogy. Neither is historical Russia Asiatic, nor are concepts like semi-Asiatic terribly useful. Furthermore, one needs no doctrine of the Asiatic mode of production to ascertain that very few (if any) societies are definable in terms of modes of production in the first place. The schools of Weber, Durkheim, and Polanyi have, of course, represented this view in terms of an enormous wealth of conceptual and empirical detail. But Bahro tended (in the GDR at least) to read only Marxist sources, and it is paradoxically the doctrine of the Asiatic mode of production (or its political side, Oriental despotism) that led him to the thesis that societies of the Soviet type at least are not definable as either modes of production or by the primacy of the economic sphere, but by the primacy of the political. Furthermore, there can be no question of mere analogy if we see the notion of semi-Asiatic agricultural despotism as an attempt, however inadequate, to conceptualize the specificity of Russian despotism, i.e., Tsarist autocracy.[13] Bahro maintains not only that the two forms of domination (Oriental and Soviet) are comparable, neither being definable by possession of private property, but he insists on the actual continuity between Tsarist autocracy and the Soviet period — in his language between agricultural and industrial despotisms. Nor is his argument merely a historicist one in the manner of the political culture school in the West, deriving one phase from the structure of the previous one. Instead, he demonstrates the convergences of several factors in the revolution-restoration (Gramsci) of étatist bureaucratic power. The autocratic Russian heritage is only one factor in this context: the social, national, geographic fragmentation of the empire inherited by the Bolsheviks,[14] the superior power of the capitalist environment encircling the Soviet Union, and the dynamics of the revolutionary situation itself — that is the availability of overwhelming state power in a political vacuum — are the others.

Bahro, of course, defends the necessity of the étatism that has emerged. In the manner of Gramsci, he is an enthusiastic apologist of the civilizing mission of the state. But he *is* critical of the logical outcome, namely that institutional structures necessary for the phase of modernizing, industrializing agricultural despotism turned out to be self-perpetuating even when no longer relevant economically. Such renewed conservatism appears, according to him, in a conservative dress — the unity of state and ideological power under industrial despotism is that of a quasi-theocracy; the political bureaucracy is a church hierarchy and secular officialdom in one. It is furthermore self-reproducing in the form of a new, political principle of stratification — though not in the form of a new, collective, possessing class.

To be more exact, Bahro presents us with two principles of stratification for

13. Bahro mixes this stress with another because he needs to represent Russia as really Asia. Otherwise, the October Revolution and its aftermath might not provide the lesson for Asia that he has in mind.

14. Bahro never asks whether an empire should have been inherited in the first place. Genuine federalism is hardly an alternative in his work. Recently, it has been argued that the fundamental features of the social model and an anticipating of the post-1945 situation were cemented as the consequence of the resynthesis, recentralization of the imperial heritage in the 1920s. Cf. Helène Carrère-D'Encausse, *L'Empire Eclaté* (Paris, 1978). The argument is present in Bahro but under the mask of inevitability. It is useful to recall for all analysts of the Soviet Union that it is neither a centralized nation state nor a federation, but a centralized, multinational empire. Cf. V. Zaslavsky's otherwise excellent analysis, "The Ethnic Question in the U.S.S.R," in *Telos*, 45 (Fall 1980), which is marred by the false alternative: unitary state or federation.

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authoritarian state socialism which, unlike Konrad and Szelenyi,[15] he does not seek to unite under a single concept. Differing levels of education provide the basis of a non-antagonistic social hierarchy. In other words, as long as different levels of education exist (Bahro seeks to abolish them in the long run), stratification according to knowledge is functional and serves "the general interest." It is the political division between the party state bureaucracy and those it administers that represents the only fundamental form of antagonism of this society. In fact, the two principles of stratification — technical education and politics — are in conflict with one another, and Bahro, like Szelenyi, tends to regard the triumph of the first, which he too interprets in a technocratic sense, as necessary for genuine social progress. To be sure, the political bureaucracy presumably[16] defined not as a class but as the hierarchic structure of state institutions, defends to the end an economic and social structure that helps to reproduce its monopoly of power. Its key instrument according to Bahro, is a monopoly over socially and politically relevant knowledge and information. It is this combination of power and knowledge that makes industrial despotism a conservative theocracy in a historical period in which its dogmatized knowledge no longer corresponds to general social needs. According to him, however, it is the insistence on knowledge that makes the present system ultimately vulnerable. Deeply apologetic of its past, Bahro nevertheless seeks to work out a critical conflict theory for the system's present. It is in this context, though, that he will again become apologetic, this time only implicitly, of an authoritarian future.

If the formation of "really existing socialism" is not determined economically, no immanent economic necessity will produce its transformation. Here Bahro has a distinct advantage (also of post-68 hindsight, but not only) over the bulk of reform economists in the 1960s who have deduced the unavoidability of reform on the bases of historical materialistic, i.e., economistic, analyses of the supposedly fundamental contradiction between modern forces of production and the existing relations of production (the politico-bureaucratic straitjacket of modern industry). He believes, however, that he has an alternative explanation of developmental possibilities. It is here that well-known Marxist themes play an intrinsic role in his presentation: a bureaucratic state whose power rests on its ideological monopoly can be transformed on the basis of a new kind of consciousness leading to an anti-bureaucratic, *cultural* revolution that has a new revolutionary subject or agent.

Bahro's alternative is derived as "objectively possible" on the basis of the dialectic of

15. For them, "rational redistribution" is that single heading, tendentially uniting the political bureaucracy, the technocracy, and even the whole of the intelligentsia. However, tacitly, a second principle, political status, is introduced by them as well when they define the institutional core as a closed ruling order or estate. (This point — analogous to Bahro's definition of the party as a closed corporation — is lost in the English translation of Szelenyi and Konrad as revised by Richard Allen). On the other side, Bahro himself uses knowledge as a principle legitimating both the antagonistic and non-antagonistic principles of stratification, even if they mean a knowledge of a fundamentally different kind. The difference between these views is that Bahro does not integrate all of the intellectuals as the tendential ruling class of the present, nor does he assign to them hegemony (this belongs to a renewed party) under his own technocratic alternative. He does accept the legitimacy of a functional hierarchy according to education. This leads Szelenyi to accuse him of being an ideologist for intellectual class rule.

16. Bahro is by no means so clear as some of his interpreters would have him (cf. Alain Touraine, *L'Après Socialisme* [Paris, 1980]) concerning the primacy of the political state to antagonistic stratification relations. At times he seems to claim that the political bureaucracy is a possessing class, but what it possesses is the state. The question whether we are dealing with a class, or a closed political status group (order or state) organized around the political institutional core of the society is hardly trivial.

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consciousness. Even a system based on the principle of bureaucratic monopoly of knowledge, in economic and military competition with late capitalism where expert knowledge has become a force of production, cannot help developing an increasingly educated, expert population on all levels of society. The fundamental contradiction of really existing socialism is therefore between the monopoly of knowledge and the necessary development of forms of consciousness that tend to overshoot it: surplus consciousness. Even here, however, we do not get a mechanical, deterministic model of revolution. Within the dialectic of consciousness, there is room for four types of development.[17] Two complementary forms of "subaltern" consciousness — what he calls *absorbed* (the fatalistic consciousness of the dominated) and *bureaucratic* (the consciousness of the dominators) — belong to the reproduction of the system as it exists. Two forms — contradictory to each other — belong to surplus consciousness. These are defined by either being directed to *compensatory* interests, the concern of which is private, atomized need satisfaction compensating for being dominated, or to *emancipatory* interests and needs that aim beyond the existing system toward a genuinely free and egalitarian society. Compensatory consciousness refers to an interest and need structure that represents the success of the state to reorganize and redirect surplus consciousness in a conformist direction; emancipatory consciousness can be preserved as a system transcending one only when self-organized. The self-organization of surplus consciousness is what Bahro refers to when he uses the Western Marxist concept of revolutionary subject.[18] This revolutionary subject does not exist: it must constitute itself. Question: from what materials? Answer: from sociologically plausible carriers of emancipatory consciousness. Who are these, what class, stratum or group? Bahro's answer, however ambiguous, points to a new revolutionary intelligentsia, one supposedly recruited from all social strata and in any case not equivalent to all present intellectuals. How are they to be organized? As a new league of communists.

Let us proceed more slowly, and above all more critically. Without any hesitation, Bahro accepts the Leninist thesis that the working strata (for socialism he rejects the concept of class) are capable of developing only economistic interests, i.e., subaltern consciousness or at best compensatory needs. For him this argument supplies ample justification for the historical dictatorship of the Bolsheviks over all strata, including industrial workers — indeed he defends just that atomization of classes that others, like Arendt and even Deutscher, tended to consider the hallmarks of totalitarianism. The breaking up of *all* corporate interest formation was necessary, he argues, for modernization and industrialization. Among the results of this atomization of all historical classes is a new form of stratification based on the supposedly non-antagonistic, classless principle of levels of knowledge and expertise. In such a social system both system transcending needs and organizational abilities are more than ever generally available only to the higher, more educated and expert strata. The argument, to be sure, contradicts the claim that the revolutionary intellectuals will be recruited from all strata, but Bahro sticks to his guns. The last did not become first in the October Revolution, and today they can become so even less — least of all on the basis of their own self-activity. To Bahro, 1953 (a confrontation over norms), 1956 (an attempted comeback of counterrevolutionary elements), 1968 (a glorious revolution of intellectuals — a slightly ironic description despite his support), 1970 (proletarian cultural revolution from above — an utterly misleading description), and even 1976

17. Bahro, *The Alternative,* p. 314, and *Lecture, op.cit.*, p. 18.
18. *Lecture*, p. 19.

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(though he doesn't say why) all demonstrate that the self-organization of industrial workers remains a myth. Let us not delude ourselves: the author of *The Alternative* (who may not be identical to the Bahro of today) could have found just as many reasons to explain away 1980 as well. Perhaps he would have spoken mainly about the role of the intellectuals, perhaps the emergence of Polish Meanys and Kirklands, perhaps he would have stressed the ambiguous role of the church.

In a sense Bahro is right: the working class as the revolutionary subject is the product of conceptual mythology in Marx, Luxemburg and, above all, Lukacs.[19] Along with Gouldner, Szelneyi and Konrad, he is justified in arguing that the myth, in its Leninist form, allowed revolutionary intellectuals to substitute themselves for workers, whose consciousness remains hopelessly empirical (i.e., reformist), in the name of the historical interests of the class known only to them. But, once again, as in the case of the Asiatic mode of production, Bahro turns a critical doctrine into an apologetic, affirmative one. Like Gouldner, but most emphatically unlike Szelenyi and Konrad, he believes that the solution is the realistic, i.e., non-mythological, acceptance on the part of a self-recruited intellectual elite of itself as the revolutionary subject. To justify this belief he offers several supportive hypotheses: (1) Intellectuals possess to the greatest extent system-transcending, emancipatory interests and needs. (This view he does not hold consistently because he is also suspicious of the corporate, immediate interests of the intellectuals in a completely free culture.) (2) The non-antagonistic character of social (as against political) stratification under state socialism allows for a homogeneity of interest representation. This position is merely asserted, dogmatically. One may wonder whether Bahro is not taken in by the appearances of a system where all open interest conflicts are suppressed, or internalized by the ruling institution. Also, stratification according to expertise may itself be political, as Szelenyi insists — even if not in the sense of the same political principle that constitutes the ruling institution. (3) The intellectualization of the work process on all except the lowest levels allows the recruitment of revolutionary intellectuals from all strata. Yes, but according to his own argumentation in (1), the bulk of these would be recruited from the best educated. (4) The historical, general interest of the body politic can be absolutely known and substantively embodied in a fully developed socio-economic-cultural (hence total) revolutionary program. It is this last hypothesis, never explicitly stated but always assumed by Bahro, that is the most questionable and the most dangerous. The idea of the absolute knowledge of history is absurd enough when assumed by a speculative, contemporary philosopher like Hegel; when joined to a theory of action as in the notion of the revolutionary subjectivity it becomes disastrous. In such cases, an epistemologically absurd conception of knowledge is replaced by that of absolute will. Whoever is appointed as subject, political action from above is legitimated, from below, de-emphasized. Modern societies are differentiated and at least tendentially plural: no single, homogeneous will can emerge from them. Such a will can be imposed only from above. This train of thought inevitably leads to the idea of a single party with state power as its goal, and Bahro is not afraid to draw the conclusion. Not only does he resolutely defend the single party dictatorship of the past, he also believes that a single party — if a new one — must lead the work of socialist transformation today.

Here we reach what seems to be the limit of tolerance of even most of Bahro's

19. On Marx, cf. Jean Cohen, "System and Class. The Subversion of Emancipation," in *Social Research* (Winter, 1978).

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sympathetic critics.[20] Nevertheless, it is Bahro who is consistent with his own premises. To him, the only justification of a many-party system is the structural presence of interest conflict in society. But he has systematically argued that in developed, really existing socialism, because of the absence of private property (the classical Marxist criterion), and of a poly-centered market economy (the Weberian criterion), and because of the intellectualization of much of physical work (the new working class assumption), social stratification is non-antagonistic, and the levels of the social hierarchy are fluid. The social whole, of course, *is* antagonistic, the line of social contradiction being drawn by the possession of political and administrative power between the party state hierarchy and the rest of society. As a result, Bahro is convinced that if political power (i.e., the party state) in such a society were democratized or even if "transitionally" it would be ready and willing to represent the *real* interests of those below, the last class feature of the society would be abolished. With the present one-party system, pluralistic representation is impossible, with its reformation it would become unnecessary: this seems to be Bahro's point. The thrust of his critique in the tradition of the 1960s seems to be aimed at the party itself: democratize yourself and political life.

Of course, Bahro is not this naive. Fully conscious of the neo-conservative response of the various parties to the threat embodied in 1968, he is nevertheless not ready to renounce the Communist party — to be sure, the ideal as against the actual one. The existing hierarchy is beyond hope; its consciousness and interests are tied to the preservation of their power. Nevertheless, *individuals* within the party and maybe even in the apparatus itself could be recruited for the new communist party that he calls league of communists, after the Yugoslav example. On this basis, the existing party must be split (echoes of Lenin and the 21 points) so that it can be rebuilt on new but completely unified foundations. When a church is hopelessly corrupt (Bahro actually uses this analogy and not only because he believes in the theocratic character of really existing socialism), a reformation can be successfully institutionalized only as a new, purified church. The party is dead: long live the party, because outside the party there is no salvation.

Bahro is a very decent man and personally not authoritarian. He hopes to preserve *his* new party from the bureaucratic fate of the old, not only by a series of organizational reforms (possibility of factions, restoration of the prinicple of election from below, free and open discussion and debate) but because he believes in the relevance of three historical assumptions, the first already given, the other two to be consciously instituted: (a) The conclusion of the capitalist road and the end of the internal threat to really existing socialism — hence the features of a despotic, bureaucratic revolution from above and a militarized, bureaucratic system of preparedness are no longer required; (b) The putting into motion of a culturally revolutionary program tendentially abolishing the split between manual and mental labor, division of labor proper according to Marx, the supposed foundation of all state domination over society; (c) The split of the party-state dyad along the lines of ideology and political power and the organization of power as *dual* and as *democratic*.

20. With the exception of Marcuse, as we will see. Paradoxically, the generally negative Szelenyi says that one party is already one too many. The witticism bypasses the issue, one or many is the alternative, not one or none, unless we are to believe (as Szelenyi does not) in the immediate possibility and desirability of an entirely direct democracy. Actually, Szelenyi, more in a manner of KOR and perhaps Hegedüs to whom he refers, seeks to introduce some realism into his own proposal. For the moment, Eastern Europe is stuck with a single party. This, however, does not mean that no elements of pluralism and self-administration can be introduced.

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The first point could be readily accepted if one believed in a historical correlation between development and democracy and in the "threatened fortress" apology of Stalinism. Even here we should not underestimate the ability and willingness of the existing system to perpetuate underdevelopment and international tension. The second, a programmatic argument, derived from Chinese and some New Left models, reopens Bahro to authoritarianism, this time in the form of a pedagogic dictatorship; while the third derived from the East European opposition is vitiated both by the idea of a single, vanguard party and that of a mono-organizational socialist state.

It is, of course, the stress on cultural revolution that made Marcuse (pp. 25ff) so enthusiastic about Bahro. In this context, he was far more willing to draw out the last consequences than Bahro himself, i.e., to accept what has been called the dictatorship over needs.[21] Bahro's own program is neatly divided into Chinese and New Left stages.[22] The first has obviously nothing to do with actual East European reform attempts from above or from below; neither market, independent social organization or political democratization plays any role here. Bahro's models, instead, are the French Jacobins, the new Jacobins of the Soviet War Communism period, and the Maoists. The only aim of this stage seems to be the economic equalization of the population, from above, in four steps: (1) Liquidation of bureaucratic corruption; (2) Abolition of piece work and work norms; (3) General participation of all in simple operative work; (4) Equalization of wages according to labor time (upward adjustment only for the most unpleasant types of work).

While the first two steps are unobjectionable, the next two recall the worst excesses not only of Maoism but also of Eastern Europe at the height of the Stalinist period. They entail, in any differentiated society, incredible burdens for significant parts of the population or, at the very least, significant parts of the population (and hardly only an upper stratum) will interpret such equalization of work and consumption as an incredible burden — politically the consequences are the same. Economically, the living standards of perhaps a third and the aspirations of perhaps two thirds would be dramatically lowered. After the experiences already mentioned, no one has the right to assume that the relevant strata will willingly, i.e., without repression, consent to such measures. Interestingly enough, while Bahro seeks to justify the equalization of consumption as a necessary prelude to future democratization (the only conceivable argument here, which, however, puts the cart before the horse), far more realistically Marcuse (pp. 32, 35) insists on the suppression of false needs (i.e., the bulk of material needs) for the majority of the population as the only way of breaking the *past-present* continuum of domination. He is unafraid (p. 32) of the repression entailed in such a process. Assuming the desirability of a society of homogeneous need structure, the only possible road to this form of equality vitiates equality on the political level. The result can be achieved only with the strengthening of repressive, bureaucratic institutions of execution and enforcement, and a bureaucracy is by definition not the equal in power of those it administers. And more, as Lukacs in a prophetic moment in the crucial year of 1919 already realized, it is precisely the institutions needed to discipline a population from above that have a tendency toward self-perpetuation. The price of planned, enforced social equality is institutionalized political inequality — the unavoidable consequence of Bahro's first cultural revolutionary stage that could be

21. Cf. F. Feher, "The Dictatorship over Needs," *Telos* 35 (Spring 1978), and F. Feher, A. Heller, "Forms of Equality," *Telos* 32 (Summer 1977).

22. Marcuse denies Bahro's relation to the Chinese cultural revolution, which is, however, decisively proven by Dutschke's testimony regarding Bahro's original manuscript.

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best described in his own words (used incorrectly to describe 1970 in Poland) as a "cultural revolution from above."

The step from Stalin to Mao is, of course, not a very great one and, in any case, it is well within Eastern Marxism. It is, however, completely against the grain of the democratic aspirations of the East European opposition that Bahro, however ambiguously, shares. On a theoretical level, he hopes to democratize his account by a model derived not from such sources, but from Western Marxist conceptions of cultural revolution. The aim remains the total transformation of the structure of needs, according to the canons of Marxian anthropology of human nature. The instruments: the complete abolition of the division between mental and manual labor on the one hand, and the abolition of all alienated, quantitative, i.e., "false," needs. The result, the rich individual of Marx's dreams, is to be accomplished through a centrally planned determination of needs and tightly related labor time schedules. This fetishism of planning painfully, if residually, present in so much of Western Marxism (e.g., in Marcuse's *Soviet Marxism*) has been repeatedly described by East European critical theorists as the fundamental structural characteristic of the *existing* East European systems.[23] Bahro may be more conscious of the dangers involved than Marcuse, but he is more afraid of the complete determination of needs from below leading to an anarchy of needs that can be mediated only by the market — a process that will lead to new inequalities. Hence, he proposes the classical Leninist solution: on the one hand, the central planning of needs and labor time from above (minimum program); on the other, the democratic choice of communally organized collectivities among various plans submitted by the center concerning different ways of organizing needs and time schedules (maximum program). This is the classical Leninist solution because of the specific time relation between the two programs implied by the terms minimum and maximum. Given an already formed need structure of the population, Bahro wants to implement only the minimum program in the immediate present, though his language hides the fact that it is the minimum program that must involve the maximum of coercion. Between minimum program and maximum program, or maximum coercion and democratic self-administration, lies the planned development of individuals capable of exercising democratic functions, i.e., a pedagogic dictatorship. It is again to Marcuse's credit that he fearlessly draws out the implication, which in any case is part and parcel of his own theory:[24] "Bahro's analysis falls back on a position that has been tabooed by both Marxism and liberalism: Plato's position (an educational dictatorship of the most intelligent) and Rousseau's (people must be forced to be free). In fact, the educational function of the socialist state is inconceivable without a recognized authority; for Bahro that authority is grounded in an elite of intelligence. However consistently Bahro may insist that the league as well as the party leadership must come from all social groups and remain accountable to the people at all levels, the scandal remains and must be sustained" (p. 32).

As Marcuse knew when he was writing this, he is opening himself and Bahro to some serious charges of authoritarianism. His answers to his critics on this point was ever ready: one must be able to distinguish between false and true needs, ones engendered by existing systems of domination and ones pointing beyond them. Otherwise, real

23. On the most sophisticated level, under the complementary rubrics of rational redistribution (Konrad, Szelenyi); and dictatorship over needs (Feher, Markus, Heller).

24. Cf. M. Bookchin, "Beyond Neo-Marxism," *Telos* 36 (Summer 1978); H. Marcuse, J. Habermas *et al.*, "Theory and Politics," *Telos* 38 (Winter 1978-79); and J. Cohen, "The Legacy of Herbert Marcuse," *Dissent* (Winter 1981).

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emancipation can in no way be imagined. I do not believe, however, that we are stuck with the dilemma that either all individually felt, perceived and claimed needs are valid (true) or that those needs are false (invalid) that appear so from the heights of the sophisticated culture critiques of industrial civilizations.[25] What hides behind the first claim is a relativistic, normless social analysis. What hides behind the second, with its implication of pedagogic dictatorship, is a dogmatic, objectivistic conception of absolute philosophical knowledge. The alternative to both is the definition of those needs as valid and true that can be defended as such in procedures of public, democratic participation and will formation involving conflict and compromise. If such procedures are to truly involve communication free of domination, a phrase Bahro uses but without understanding, they must be institutionalized in the self-organized and managed cells of social life. Instead of seeing such forms of direct democracy as results of pedagogic dictatorship, we must understand them as necessary and possible from the outset if a dictatorial outcome is to be avoided. The road to a society democratically organized from below (undoubtedly Bahro's utopia, too) cannot in principle be achieved by non-democratic means.

Bahro does not unambiguously consent to the authoritarian implication of his social philosophy. From the very beginning he hopes to incorporate some democratic elements in his program. His league of communists is to be distinguished from the old party because of its deomcratic communication with popular organizations. From the outset, councils, committees, cooperatives (the seeds of future council democracy) are to be established. In the context of pedagogic dictatorship, they are to be "the schools of the masses" — in Marcuse's reading the only consistent one. How do things stand with Bahro himself? The term dual power or dual supremacy appears two or three times in his work. Marcuse, in line with his own conception, clearly misinterprets the letter of the conception when he understands it as a duality at the summit between the communist party and the league of communists (p. 31) — a split that Bahro seeks only temporarily. With a bit of wishful thinking, one is tempted to accept Dutschke's interpretation (p. 202), who refers back to the period between February and October 1917, when Russia was temporarily "the freest country in the world," or Pelikan's (p. 181), who reinterprets Bahro's conception according to the Polish developments toward (as we know) August 1980, leading to the establishment of independent, competing social institutions from below — what the members of KOR have very accurately called the reconstitution of elements of civil society. In point of fact, Marcuse's textually incorrect interpretation is closer to Bahro's thrust than Dutschke's philologically accurate derivation of the term dual power, or Pelikan's projection of the theory of new evolutionism into Bahro. Demonstrably, he is throughout his work rather skeptical about the advance represented by the recovery of civil rights, cultural freedoms and institutions of autonomous interest representation. These he considers at best a detour necessary only because the extreme resistance of the systems to genuine communist reformation pushes the opposition into the minimal program of the restoration of bourgeois rights and, at worst, the expression of particular, separate interests of intellectuals (cultural freedom) and workers (free trade unions).

While it would be possible to find lines in *The Alternative* more positive about such innovations, it is ultimately Bahro's conception as a whole that speaks against a

25. On the theoretical problem of needs, cf. A. Heller, *Marx's Theory of Need* (London, 1977) and C. Castoriadis, "From Marx to Aristotle, from Aristotle to Us," in *Social Research* (Winter, 1978), pp. 724ff.

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principled defense of the duality of society and state: [26] his insistence on the leading role of a single party albeit a reformed one, and the even more fundamental definition of all interest formation from below as merely compensatory. With this notion in mind, we can give the various interpretations of his conception of dual power their due. Bahro's league of communists is first constituted as a social movement, against the existing state. Thus, in the context of the overthrow of the present system, there may be indeed initially a duality of power between the representative of society, the league and the party-state. Here is the source of Marcuse's misreading, except that Bahro does not for moment seek to institutionalize any division at the summit. In terms of a rather loosely interpreted history, one may be able to divine some sort of relationship to the October Revolution as well in the manner of Dutschke, except that the Bolsheviks did not succeed in reducing the independent action of the councils until the very end; they were not hegemonic in society. In any case, Bahro is in a hurry to recomplete the steps from February to October and beyond, when even in his own testimony Russia was hardly the freest country in the world. The party in the end must be reunited with the new league as its core, and state power must be preserved as a unity. [27] Of course, the oppositions of the Polish KOR, to name the most relevant contrast, are also unwilling to challenge the unity of the institutions of the party-state, but for strategic reasons. For now they accept the leading role of the existing party in the state, though not in society. Being ready to deal with the existing party in the state, they may indeed seem less radical than Bahro. Of course, Bahro himself continues to believe in the possibility of a genuine, mono-organizational, socialist state. It is paradoxically thus that he negates the idea of a genuinely self-managing, repoliticized society. Unlike KOR, and the contradicting Pelikan's interpretation, he insists on the ideological hegemony over society, the *leading role in society* of the very same element, the new league of communists (i.e., the reformed communist party), which must aim at becoming (or already is) the leading spirit of the state as well. It is this step that completes the journey to October. Bahro's alternative is, at best, a replay of the Russian Revolution under contemporary circumstances. It is thus a Western Marxist program of cultural revolution turned Eastern in his hands.

For whom is *The Alternative* written? Paradoxically, Marcuse's enthusiastic reading seems to support Szelenyi's implication that we are dealing with an ideological defense of the road of intellectuals to class power which, on the structural level, will be this time the transition from an industrial to a "scientific-cultural" despotism. [28] Though persuasive, this thesis should be challenged. Bahro continues the classical suspicion of Bolshevism (in this respect the heir of Jacobinism) against all class or even

26. We should note here the fundamental identity between the ideal of dual power demanded in many of the council experiments from Petersburg 1905 to Budapest 1956, and the imperfect and perhaps temporary achievement, as the result of "democratic" revolutions in at least some Western European countries (and the U.S.), of a form of separation between state and civil society that did not deprive society of its own mode of political public life. The classical work on this topic remains, in spite of its pessimism and overly global analysis, J. Habermas' *Strukturwandel der Oeffentlichkeit* (Neuwied, 1963). The point concerning the Hungarian councils is made by C. Lefort in "The Age of Novelty," *Telos* 29 (Fall 1976).

27. Bahro, *The Alternative, op.cit.*, p. 350.

28. Bahro's alternative, in Marcuse's words "would demolish the privileged position of the intelligentsia by universalizing it." In Szelenyi's depiction: "The solution to the Platonian dilemma is found: in order to ensure that philosophers do not represent a privileged class, you make everybody a philosopher.... But what are poor intellectuals to do until everybody becomes an intellectual?" They will, of course, rule in the lengthy "transition." Szelenyi, *op.cit.*, pp. 119-120.

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interest group formation on top as well as bottom, including very explicitly the stratum of the intellectuals as a whole. To be sure, rather more carefully than in his other works, Szelenyi himself states only that Bahro's "alternative from above" is an alternative *of and for* the Bolshevik intellectuals — a statement hard to challenge. On the other hand, it is quite evidently not *for* the Bolshevik intellectuals as a whole, present and future. Whether we accept Kolakowski's often repeated thesis concerning the end of the possibility of revisionism in the context of parties now cynical concerning their own ideology or the contradictory claim of Hermann Weber (pp. 17-19) based on the ever-reproduced internal contradiction between the theory and practice of official communism, or even the stress of Pelikan on a necessary combination of reform orientations within the existing parties with a process of democratization from below (p. 172), we must nevertheless realize that Bahro's book, written by a man of apparatus, reveals an internal tension within at least the SED. This tension cannot be simply understood as that of technocrat versus politocrat (in a sense, Bahro is neither) nor especially in the GDR as that of decentralized or centralized versions of socialism. Bahro does not belong to the reform generation of the 1960s whose activity, as the Czech example shows, tended to release forces from a society formed before the imposition of Stalinist dictatorship — forces that could no longer be integrated in any version of a one-party rule. Politically, as Pelikan notes,[29] he is further away than they from the actual movements of East Europe — a good deal further than his nearest analogue, Hegedüs, whose own acceptance of a single party is at best pragmatic, at worst historicist, but who nevertheless decisively supports all movements for the reconstitution of the state-society duality.

While it may be rather difficult to directly point to specific groupings or strata in the generally de-ideologized East European parties who would identify with Bahro's alternative, it may be nevertheless possible to indicate the political trajectory of his proposals in terms of existing structural possibilities. Bahro's program of cultural revolution — legitimated by a new egalitarianism above all, but also by a proposal for participation from below that would fully respect the ideological hegemony of a "new" Communist Party — is translatable into part of the solution of a yet unsolved problem of the East European parties of hoping to keep the system's identity intact in the context of contemporary modernizaton and rationalization.[30] This process, involving some solution of the now chronic rationality crises of the regimes, will be possible only if the centers of power in East Europe and the Soviet Union manage to move from the positive, direct subordination of all forms of social life at the party-state, to a negative, less direct, less homogenous form of subordination that might permit rather different spaces for the movement in the various social spheres of culture, polity and economy. This transition, which may unite the hopes of the most conformist remnants of market socialism with those of more conservative elements, is possible only in the context of a rather significant increase of the party-state's ideological resources. Here is the possible role of the revival of nationalism all along the line, but in the GDR in particular — where the national issue cannot be revived for several obvious reasons — the "reformation" of orthodox Marxism in a necessarily neo-Leninist form may be a

29. Cf. also C. Heuberger, "Neue Wege zur Ueberwindung des Osteuropäischen Sozialismus," in *Rundbrief des Sozialistischen Büros* (May, 1979).

30. On the economic level, this process has been described first by L. Janossy as the transition from extensive economic development (i.e., drawing in of ever newer sectors of society into urban industrial production and consumption), to intensive development (i.e., expanding the need structure of the existing population, and the productivity of the existing labor force).

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possible replacement. Whatever Bahro's personal intentions, it is only in such a context that his work (or some other version of a similar thesis), could have and may yet find its political importance.

The Alternative is addressed to the party, yet Bahro was jailed and expelled. From 1924, the attacks on Lukacs and Korsch, the *Eastern* Marxist Communist parties resolutely fought against *Western* Marxist interpretations and even justification of their politics. The reason is perhaps still the same: the authoritarian socialist house of power cannot afford to legitimate as its own two-dimensional, internally antinomic ideologies, open to immanent ideology critique. Bahro's antinomies are from this point of view especially dangerous, because at variance with the central thrust of his book some of them express the aspirations of today's opposition. His insistence on the need for a new church in a Communist reformation could not, of course, be any more pleasing to the orthodox than to those who wish for a genuinely secular politics. If it is true that rather conservative reformers in the party are in fact addressed, it is also true that Bahro tells them that their aims cannot be ultimately carried out without a temporary institutional break in the party, necessary for a full-scale purification and reconstruction. The idea recalls 1956 and 1968 — the only precedents for such a thing in the history of authoritarian state socialism. After 1968 especially (and 1980 has not falsified the point) the ruling parties have realized that any internal institutional split would endanger their very survival. [31] This is the context of the new strategy of the opposition at least in Poland: structural reform from below.

Bahro's actual audience turned out other than intended. Because of its mixture of Western Marxist and Left Communist foundations, we should not be surprised about the intellectual success of *The Alternative* in the West. The Eastern Marxist outcome of the book makes it irrelevant to contemporary struggles for liberation in Eastern Europe. To fully realize the reasons is a necessary condition for the renewal of the desperately needed dialogue between critical theories East and West, who must free themselves from all apology concerning one another's systems of domination.

Andrew Arato

31. The argument is brilliantly made, against all historical materialist interpretations of Eastern Europe — including the thesis of Szelenyi and Konrad — by M. Rakovski in *Toward an East European Marxism* (a ridiculously inaccurate title of the British publishers given to *Le Marxisme face aux pays de l'est*).

Rockefeller Foundation Commission on the Humanities. *The Humanities in American Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980.

The resurgence of virulent racism and jingoism that has accompanied Ronald Reagan's call for American renewal prompts facile comparisons with the Cold War period. But it is not to the Reaganites and the New Right that we should look for a revival of clichés from the 1950s — their vision appears to be closer to 1920s vintage conservatism — but, rather, to the liberals and neo-conservatives among the intellisia, who, having failed politically, now withdraw to the activity that best suits them: cultural criticism. Recent reports (*New York Times*, February 19, 1981) that some

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four hundred intellectuals, including such familiar names as Nathan Glazer, Irving Kristol, Seymour Martin Lipset, and Sidney Hook, have created a "Committee for the Free World" designed to insure liberty "in the world of ideas" suggest that little has changed among many American thinkers since the first Cold War. Similarly, Barbara Tuchman's essay on "The Decline of Quality," published in *The New York Times Magazine* (November 2, 1980) on the eve of last year's presidential election, is a sign that the lamentations about kitsch and mass culture that were once the domain of the likes of Philip Rahv, Clement Greenberg and Dwight Macdonald have not lost favor among liberals and former liberals. In fact, Tuchman's article, which 30 years ago would have appeared in such esoteric places as *Partisan Review* or *Politics*, suggests that mass culture critique has itself become a mass phenomenon, catering to a burgeoning clientele of cultured urban gentry and tasteful suburbanites. As a result, cultural criticism, once the first line of defense for "vanguard" or avant-garde culture, is now indistinguishable from the very kitsch it so stridently condemns.

The degenerate status of current cultural analysis — of which *The Humanities in American Life*, a report by the Rockefeller Foundation Commission on the Humanities, is a prime example — is evident after a review of the earlier work of Rahv, Greenberg, and Macdonald. In 1939, Rahv's "Paleface and Redskin" and Greenberg's "Avant-Garde and Kitsch" together defined the issues that would dominate cultural debate among liberal and independent left intellectuals for much of the Cold War period. [1] While Rahv found American literature caught in constant oscillation between two sterile alternatives, a genteel "highbrow" culture and a mindless cult of primitive experience, Greenberg attacked both the Hollywood kitsch produced for the working class and the "middlebrow" naturalism of bourgeois culture in the name of a vital but isolated avant-garde. Macdonald, for his part, flippantly identified every manifestation of mass culture with authoritarianism of the right or left, finding in *Kulturbolschewismus* the common element of fascism, Stalinism, and New Deal liberalism. [2]

As this critique developed in the 1940s and 1950s, what exactly it was that had to be preserved from the onslaught of kitsch and "middlebrow" culture became increasingly unclear. Greenberg, in particular, identified the avant-garde and its defenders with an "escape from ideas, which were infecting the arts with the ideological struggles of society," a position that defined the "vanguard" artists and intellectuals almost completely in terms of their social position and technique. [3] Later, Greenberg's definition of the avant-garde became even more elusive: it was "the 'cadre' that has led the fight for aesthetic truth, high standards, continuity with tradition, and against the utilitarian ethos during the past century." [4] In the end, the avant-garde and its followers were distinguished only by their mastery of Greenbergian art criticism and other variants of cultural formalism, a self-sufficient body of knowledge that would enable the Bohemian "cadres" to reorganize society along the lines of an aesthetic technocracy. Mass culture critique ended up as little more than the political program

1. Philip Rahv, "Paleface and Redskin," in Rahv, *Essays on Literature and Politics, 1932-1972* (Boston, 1978), and Clement Greenberg, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch," in Greenberg, *Art and Culture* (Boston, 1961).

2. See Dwight Macdonald, "Kulturbolschewismus Is Here," *Partisan Review* 8 (November-December 1941), pp. 442-451, and "A Theory of 'Popular,' " *Politics* 1 (February 1944), pp. 20-23.

3. Clement Greenberg, "Towards a Newer Laocoon," *Partisan Review* 7 (Fall 1940), p. 301.

4. Clement Greenberg, "Work and Leisure under Industrialism," *Commentary* 15 (July 1953), p. 55.

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of the mass culture critics themselves.

The recent spate of essays and reports on the quality of American culture reveals that this critique has re-emerged in an even more debased form. For better or worse, the mass culture critics of the 1940s and 1950s did identify themselves with the achievements of modernist culture and with an ill-defined socialist promise. No matter how much the body of thought initiated by Rahv, Greenberg and Macdonald regressed to a self-serving apotheosis of intellectuals in the escape from ideas, the first generation of mass culture critics can be credited with a recognition of the depoliticizing thrust of the consumer culture and with a perceptive analysis of the failure of either Popular Front or New Deal cultural nationalism to create a vital popular culture in the United States. Today's cultural critics, however, offer only cryptic notions of quality or standards as alternatives to what they see as the threat of kitsch. Thus Tuchman defines quality as "investment of the best skill and effort possible to produce the finest and most admirable result possible" and as "honesty of purpose as against catering to cheap or sensational sentiment." On the basis of this vapid definition, Tuchman elaborates for several pages on the difference between "Q" and "non-Q" (quality and non-quality) in American culture, noting the steady slide from Fred Astaire ("Q") to Johnny Carson ("non-Q") as symbolic of the decline of quality in our time. Ultimately, Tuchman's article is little more than a guide to good taste for those who would hate to find themselves "non-Q" at a cocktail party. Whereas once the attack on kitsch was made in the name of Proust and Trotsky, it now raises the banners of Masterpiece Theater and John Anderson. The style, the feel, the excitement of "quality" have become all that matter in this latest phase of the escape from ideas.

The political content of this second-generation mass culture critique is immediately clear from a quick reading. Both Tuchman and Hilton Kramer, who was tracking down subversives in his *New York Times* art column long before it (once again) became fashionable, blame the radicalism of the 1960s — that "general assault on mind and intellect," as Kramer puts it — for the collapse of America's "Q" quotient.[5] Meanwhile, the editorial board of the *Times* has urged the new administration to "stop funding artistic circuses," notably film courses for women office workers and arts programs for blacks, workers and farmers.[6] Combining an instinctive right-wing politics with a superficial conception of cultural quality that precludes the discussion of ethical, political or aesthetic values, this revived cultural criticism is the intellectual complement to the rise of Reaganism.

Like the new mass culture critics, the authors of *The Humanities in American Life* are incapable of explaining their vision of American cultural renewal. A blue-ribbon panel of experts drawn from the academy, corporations, and government, the Rockefeller Foundation Commission is at a complete loss when it comes to defining what constitutes the humanities. One reads that "the essence of the humanities is a spirit or an attitude toward humanity. They show how the individual is autonomous and at the same time bound, in the ligatures of language and history, to humankind across time and throughout the world. The humanities are an important measure of the values and aspirations of any society" (p. 3). That 32 luminaries engaged in well-funded speculation about humanistic inquiry can do no better than this in delimiting the meaning and purpose of their fields is as sure a sign as any that the humanities are

5. Hilton Kramer, "Funding American Culture, *New York Times Book Review*, December 28, 1980, p. 11.

6. *New York Times*, December 12, 1980.

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in deep trouble.

When addressing the recent and tedious debate over populism and elitism in culture and education, the report adopts an equally vacuous tone that admits to the validity of portions of each position without ever analyzing the substantive issues of the debate. The result is a fuzzy, ambiguous product that seems designed to avoid as many difficult ethico-political problems as possible, thereby illustrating the very crisis of the humanities that the commission seeks to rectify.

The belief that "a free society depends on citizens who are broadly educated" runs through the report (p. 28). Characteristically, the commissioners fail to ask whether the ideal of an educated polity still exists (if it ever did), nor do they consider their own contributions to its weakening or demise. For the very premise of this report, that a corporate-funded body of specialists may best outline the broad policies of government, is so averse to the concept of a self-governing citizenry as to make its ruminations about the humanities and democracy ridiculous. Nowhere do the authors show more enthusiasm in an otherwise bland document than when they recommend more and more federal committees of cultural experts and administrators to manage the state's arts and humanities programs. At the same time, the report conceives of the public as clients or consumers of such programs, rather than as possible sources of new ideas or works. The commission's account reads as little more than a lengthy inter-office memorandum between administrators on the fine-tuning of the cultural welfare state. In the face of such over-riding concerns, the expressed hopes of reinvigorating democratic politics and a participatory culture are largely meaningless.

When the authors are not busy proposing more humanities planning boards, they eagerly list the new varieties of technological hardware available for the dissemination of knowledge. After the obligatory remarks about television's detrimental effects on literacy, the report urges "ongoing cooperation. . . between media experts and humanists in the study of uses of the electronic media" (p. 146). Indeed, far more space is devoted to satellite systems, multi-channel cable television, video recorders, computers and photocopiers than to any consideration of the ends to which such devices might be put or of the ways in which they undermine traditions of intellectual competency and connoisseurship.

Overtly political issues do occasionally intrude upon the report's analysis of the humanities, but they do so in the muted and innocuous terms of managerial vocabulary and are therefore unrecognizable. In a passage on relevance in research, the commission writes that "society must be the subject of scholarship, not its master" (p. 105), a typically neutral resolution of the controversy that empties it of any significance. Similarly, a recommendation that the Department of Education issue an edict in favor of critical thinking as a goal of secondary education (p. 37) raises the question of whether the commissioners have ever wandered outside the library or foundation board room to inspect the current status of critical thought in everyday life. If all that stands between the present situation and the diffusion of critical thinking in American society is such a bureaucratic bulletin, then Reagan's plan to abolish the Department of Education may be an even more serious threat than first appeared.

Technics and administration emerge as the only topics treated with any thoroughness and detail in this report, a reflection of the ongoing escape from ideas engaged in by American humanists for close to a century. The authors may refer to an ambiguous "explosion of knowledge" (p. 64) in the late 19th century as the impetus to the rise of the specialized university system, but actually the fragmentation of intellect

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that dates from that period has more specific roots in the needs of the state and corporations for planners and managers disillusioned of religion, genteel culture, or holistic world views. Today, under the pressures of budget cuts, laissez-faire economics, and a renewed Cold War, the dissolution of culture into administration continues apace. While the Reagan administration plans to cut the entire budget of the National Endowment for the Arts by 50 percent, the amount allocated for the management of the NEA will actually *increase* by $500,000. Apparently (*New York Times,* April 19, 1981) these additional funds will cover the cost of processing the Endowment's rejection letters to unsuccessful applicants. In the same spirit, the authors of *The Humanities in American Life* have disavowed the creation of new ideas and values for the enumeration of gadgets and subcommittees. Like their comrades-in-arms in the business of mass culture critique, the Rockefeller Foundation's humanists detect a crisis in American arts and letters. However, by so enthusiastically embracing the tenets of contemporary instrumental culture, with its disdain for speculative thought and ethical propositions, they have merely brought that crisis to its logical conclusion: the rebirth of culture as double-entry bookkeeping.

Casey Blake

Bertram Gross. *Friendly Fascism: The New Face of Power in America.* New York: M. Evans, 1980. 410 pages. $15.00.

Is fascism unique, the result of a confluence of historical forces unlikely to be repeated and thus a social form limited to a particular period? Or is it a generic phenomenon? To what extent does it make sense to talk of the possibilities of a fascist America? Would it be a friendly fascism, or does fascism always rest on systematic and openly brutal coercion?

Efforts at formulating a generic concept of fascism generally have taken two routes: the liberal and the Marxist.[1] The liberal view traces fascism to the anomic disruptions of modernization. Rapid industrialization fosters socio-cultural dislocation as traditional values are discredited; established status relations, particularly the petty bourgeoisie's, are upended, resulting in widespread confusion and the loss of self-esteem. In the midst of the anomic void, people find meaning in fascist movements likely to arise in backward or militarily defeated countries where democratic institutions are weak.

Where the liberal position associates fascism with rapid modernization, the Marxist view understands it in terms of the development of capitalism. As Horkheimer wrote, the main premise underlying the latter is that: "He who does not wish to speak of capitalism should be silent about fascism."[2] That is, fascism develops in response to the breakdown of liberal capitalism, and permits the capitalist class to retain its

1. See Walter Goldfrank, "Fascism and World Economy," in B.H. Kaplan, ed., *Social Change in the Capitalist World Economy* (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1978), pp. 75-117.

2. Max Horkheimer, quoted in David Held, *Introduction to Critical Theory* (Berkeley: University Press, 1980), p. 52.

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privileges and power. The fascist state is necessary for advanced capitalism. While fascism requires the capitalist class to surrender considerable decision-making powers to an ever more active state, it also both safeguards the right to unlimited private property and enlarges capitalist markets.

Gross' analysis of fascism is eclectic. His account of the rise of fascism and of the possibility of friendly fascism in the United States is rooted in the logic of capital accumulation. This logic, however, results in tendencies toward fascism to the extent that it promotes the anomie (the sense of falling apart, the loneliness and alienation, the erosion of authority, the rampant "sex, drugs, madness and cults," in Gross' words) which is the centerpiece of the liberal view. If Gross begins his analysis with the links between capitalism and fascism, he ends up with solutions consistent with the liberal understanding, taking great pains to reassure us (and perhaps, the friendly fascists up the road) that he truly loves America, is simply presenting a patriotic warning, and that the true democracy necessary to thwart the realization of friendly fascism requires not the overcoming but merely the humanization of capitalism.

Gross' central theme is that advanced American capitalism has produced the basis of a new style of fascism, which has been coming for a number of years with the steady encroachments on civil and personal liberties to shore up supports for the system. This virtually assures an easy transition to full-fledged (though new style) fascism if advanced capitalism, like its liberal predecessor, faces collapse.

New-style fascism is, of course, a "friendly" fascism, where big business is an equal partner of big government; control relies not on charismatic leaders, one-party rule, the glorification of the state, and the dissolution of legislatures, but on sophisticated technologies of information, mind, and population management; legitimacy requires not mass mobilization but mass passivity. Faceless oligarchs standing behind the machinery of formal democracy, governmental-industrial-communications-police complexes expertly employing scientific tools, and not SS troops banging on doors in the middle of the night — this is the stuff of friendly fascism.

This account meshes nicely with the recent forceful emergence of corporatist structures and with Critical Theory's assessment of the instrumentalization of reason and the subsequent rise of the authoritarian state. Unfortunately, Gross fails to consider seriously these connections and, consequently, the notion of friendly fascism remains as it was when originally presented in a 1970 essay:[3] merely suggestive. Yet, Gross' argument warrants attention, despite its tendency to examine everything and thus nothing, its reliance on sources such as *Seven Days in May*, and its effort to reveal such "dirty secrets" as the fact that the largest number of street criminals are young blacks and that American society is soft on corporate crime!

Gross locates the origins of friendly fascism in post-World War II developments that formalized ties between the corporate economy and the increasingly powerful federal government. Beset by a series of challenges thrown up by a still unsettled economy, an expanding communism, and movements of national liberation, corporate capitalism moved in a number of well-known directions. An imperialist program rooted in multinational corporate development backed by American military strength, integrated the non-communist world by creating an international market and outposts of dependent fascism. Domestically, growing state intervention through military contracts, public relief and educational support subsidized production costs and enhanced the corporate performance now guided less by an unpredictable

3. Bertram Gross, "Friendly Fascism, A Model for America," *Social Policy* 1 (November-December, 1970), p. 42-52.

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marketplace and more by a system of rational planning. These developments culminate in the centralization of capital and power not in the hands of any Galbraithian technostructure but of a sophisticated yet divided Establishment.

The "mysterious Establishment" consists of several interlocking levels. The lowest two levels — the Executive Managers and the Junior and Contingent Members — contain the most members but power resides in the upper three levels. The Ultra-Rich (despite the fact that "most of them are addicted to sensory gratification on a grand scale"), the Corporate Overseers (those few thousand who control the largest industrial corporations, financial institutions, transportation and utility companies), and the Chief Executive Network (comprising the presidency, the courts, the Congress, and various advisory committees), administer the system in a spirit of partnership and with an unwavering commitment to capital accumulation. Their job is facilitated by a legitimating ideology according to which "communism and socialism are bad," "the capitalist order is good," and "capitalism no longer exists" (having been replaced by a mixed economy or a welfare state). Why this third belief is necessary given the alleged effectiveness of the first two is never made clear.

The source of the Establishment's strength, however, has recently shown itself to be a basis of weakness. The reverse side of those processes that produced Establishment integration is social fragmentation, the disassociation of work, family, and community, and the resultant increase in loneliness and alienation, in popular expectations, and in the lack of confidence in business and political institutions. Combined with the shrinkage of the capitalist world, these problems pose a serious threat to the Establishment and may be met, Gross argues, by the full unveiling of friendly fascism.

There is nothing new in Gross' account of the roots of friendly fascism. Those familiar with even a part of the vast literature on monopoly capitalism and power elites will learn nothing from Gross' discussion, which fails to raise key questions: How was the United States able to avoid the corporatist inroads that underlay the rise of fascism in Germany and Italy? How did New Deal monopoly capitalism differ from classic fascism? What did the two have in common as responses to the collapse of liberal capitalism? What are the authoritarian implications of the growing autonomy of the state in organized capitalism from the capitalist class? What does it mean in terms of fascism, assuming the notion has any conceptual integrity, that the ruling class no longer rules, that the state is compelled to be more responsive to other class groups, that the state embodies not the interests of a traditional landed elite, but those of new class professionals?

The specific form friendly fascism will assume depends on the character of the "Free World" empire. Should it collapse, American retrenchment would bring about a Fortress America, characterized by a fairly substantial reduction of the standard of living. Conversely, a reorganization of the empire that brought it closer into line with the changed realities of the international economy and in terms of which the United States would become the manager of the Free World would foster a "Trilateral Empire" and with it the risk of large-scale military involvement.

Regardless of the form assumed by friendly fascism, a streamlining of the Establishment will be required. This requirement suggests a "friendly fascist federalism," a national version of New York City's Reconstruction Finance Corporation, which would subordinate elected officials to appointed representatives from the banking and business community in a system of federally monitored state and municipal activities. Central to this federalism is what Gross calls a

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"righteous presidency' — a powerful chief executive network capable of coordinating establishment activities with an eye toward long-run interests combined with a conception of presidential leadership which emphasizes righteous morality, justifying the growing militarization of society. At present, two developments facilitate the formation of authoritarian federalism. The first is the growth of radical right populism; the second, the coming to prominence of neoconservatism, an 'ideology of central power,' which favors technical solutions to social problems, the lowering of popular aspirations, and the restriction of democratic politics. Unlike the ideology of classic fascism, Gross observes, this new ideology based "on market virtue, hierarchic excellence, wondrous technology and the goodness of hard times [is] not needed to mobilize masses to high peaks of emotional fervor. In contrast, [it] helps prevent mass mobilization..., [its] growing function is to maintain the loyalty of intellectuals, scientists, and technicians at the Establishment's middle and lower ranks" (p. 203).

In short, an ideological context has been established in terms of which the undermining of formally democratic procedures, the *raison d'être* of authoritarian federalism, can take place without the crudities of Watergate. A steady but gradual erosion of labor unions, sharp attacks on left dissident groups, and, ultimately, the use of science and technology to manage information to circumscribe the political agenda, will serve to promote conformist behavior. For those in the middle levels of society and up, a variety of incentives — extended professionalism, expanded leisure and consumerism — will be available to encourage conformity. Most of the rest will have access to the innocuous safety valves of "sex, drugs, madness and cults," and for a small minority there will prevail a "ladder of terror," starting with personal surveillance and dossier building, moving to legal confinement and torture, and ending with counter-revolution. Domestic terror and violence, however, will have a minor role in friendly fascism. Faceless, sanitized, rational administration will be its most distinctive feature.

Throughout the first 338 pages of the book, Gross insists that friendly fascism is a real possibility. Concerned with "true democracy," in the concluding 50 pages he backs away from this view. Where earlier Gross discounted democratic politics (an anti-Establishment president elected with the aid of a "huge popular following including blue-collar workers, white ethnics, lower and middle classes, scientists, artists, professionals, rebellious establishment technicians, and maverick millionaires," he tells us, would not be able to forestall friendly fascism), now he places his hopes in them. The logic of capital accumulation, he argues, has generated a counter logic of true democracy — an alternative logic expressed in the history of resistance to arbitrary rule, unjustified privilege, and restricted decision-making processes. This democratic logic is at present thriving on a thousand fronts, he says: in the actions of unions, neighborhood groups, and minority movements, in the presence of a viable left in academia, in survey data which indicate that a majority of Americans favor democracy, and in the proliferation of humanistic, moral, esthetic values.

Thus there is a solid basis on which we can begin to not simply contain friendly fascism but democratize the Establishment: limit the concentration of wealth and income, extend public control over larger corporations, decentralize government, democratize the economy: provide a program of guaranteed jobs and price stability, decentralize economic planning to the level of neighborhoods, work places, towns and regions; and democratize the social base: expand unionism and strengthen local community groups. The realization of true democracy, however, promises not so much to destroy capitalism but to strengthen and humanize it. A humanistic

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capitalism, "in which a choice of productive and fulfilling job opportunities is always available for those able and willing to work for pay, inflation is prevented, and a guaranteed minimum income is provided for anyone" (p. 374) would provide corporations with the opportunity to increase their aggregate profits.

In sum, we currently are caught in the midst of two grand competing logics: capital accumulation and true democracy. To help assure the proper resolution Gross proposes we seek out the opportunities for small victories which abound in the United States, reaffirm the democratic vision and, last but not least, present ourselves as "true patriots," unashamed of our love for America. Although his vision of true democracy is naive, Gross is correct to highlight the importance of democratic traditions to advanced capitalism. In this context, Gross observes, friendly fascism will have to adopt democratic disguises and preserve certain democratic formalisms — "as new-style partnerships develop in most First World societies, a new corporatism is emerging, a corporatism described by some observers... as corporatist democracy" (p. 354). Unfortunately, this matter is never carefully examined, for Gross would be on much firmer footing had he interpreted the developments he describes as pointing to the emergence of a "friendly corporatism" (quite compatible with capitalist democracy) rather than friendly fascism (which would be inconsistent with even the guise of democracy).

Corporatism and fascism share similar historical roots and structural features. Indeed, Schmitter deliberately defines corporatism as including both liberal democratic planning and fascist modes of control: Corporatism is a "system of interest representation in which the constituent units are organized into a limited number of singular, compulsory, non-competitive, hierarchically ordered and functionally differentiated categories, recognized or licensed (if not created) by the state and granted a deliberate representational monopoly within their respective categories in exchange for observing certain controls on their selection of leaders and articulation of demands and supports."[4] Liberal or societal corporation is a more or less voluntaristic response to evolutionary social and economic developments; authoritarian or state corporatism is imposed and maintained with the systematic employment of state coercion, and appears to be a "defining element of, if not structural necessity for, the antiliberal, delayed capitalist, authoritarian, neomercantilist state."[5] Fascist state corporatism in Germany and Italy was historically preceded by efforts to establish societal corporatist arrangements. Thus, fascism is in parts an outgrowth of the failure of societal corporatism.

In the search for solutions that would restore social peace in the post-World War I period, Alan Wolfe notes, corporatist forms, with their promise of harmonious interaction and their assumption that self-regulation would obviate the need for state compulsion, were in abundance in every major capitalist society.[6] However, as the corporatist solution increasingly displayed its authoritarian side in response to the unrelenting economic collapse of liberal capitalism, the United States quickly dropped it in favor of the New Deal program. Despite a variety of important similarities between the two responses to the decline of capitalism, the monopoly capitalism

4. Phillipe Schmitter, "Still the Century of Corporatism?" in P.C. Schmitter and G. Lehmbruch, eds., *Trends Toward Corporativist Interaction* (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1979), p. 13.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 22.

6. See Alan Wolfe, *The Limits of Legitimacy* (New York: Free Press, 1977). A good discussion of the corporatist efforts that took place in the United States during this period is found in James Gilbert, *Designing the Industrial State* (Chicago: Quadrangle Press, 1972).

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sponsored by the New Deal differed substantially from fascism in its treatment of organized labor, its policy of moderate downward income redistribution, its expansion of welfare and service programs, and in permitting the capitalist class to retain its power and privilege.

Gross argues that these differences did not uproot the possibility of fascism, but strengthened it: safeguarding the fascist tendencies inherent in the logic of capital accumulation and readying them for re-emergence in more propitious times. There is every reason to believe that the systematic weakening of monopoly capitalism will be met, initially at least, with the same efforts at societal corporatism that marked early reactions to the fall of liberal capitalism. Moreover, there is reason to think that societal corporatism is much more compatible with the requirements of contemporary capitalism than was the case earlier.

At present, the most significant effort to formulate solutions to the vast array of problems besetting American capitalism is neo-conservative supply-side economics. Its program is to secure a more systematic form of depoliticization, to lessen public consumption, and to spur reindustrialization. Implicit in this program is a call for corporatist democracy (societal corporatism). Thus, in a recent issue, *Business Week* argues that the solution to the American malaise requires a "new social contract," a "new sense of teamwork" based on agreement among leadership groups. "At the center of the new consensus must stand the recognition that each social group will be measured by how it contributes to economic revitalization. Each group's income must be related firmly to its economic achievement." Several months later, in *The New York Review of Books*, Felix Rohatyn insisted that America can survive "only by building a mixed economy, geared mostly to business enterprise, in which an active partnership between business, labor and government strikes the kinds of bargains... that an advanced Western democracy requires to function."[7]

Given the state's inability to continue to rest its legitimacy on the provision of material concessions to depoliticized segments of the electorate, a new form of integration based on a direct incorporation of these segments into the state apparatus, is needed. A corporatism which makes such incorporation contingent upon acceptance of general procedures and goals and which seeks not to destroy but to strengthen the existing organizations found among these segments in order to make them viable instruments of political representation, would meet this requirement in a way consistent with neo-conservative aims. Corporatist democracy would involve at the leadership level the integration of various producer groups on the basis of a system of representation and direct cooperative interaction, and this probably would enhance the degree of mobilization and social control that is possible at the mass level. It would entail the institutionalization of functional groups in the formation of public policy in such a way that the link of each group to the state occurs through its interaction with other groups.[8] Such active and continuous involvement in policy formation by the national representatives of functional groups would reduce pressure on the state to intervene in the economy with a constant eye toward electoral success; it would allow the state to act more in accord with the objective necessity disclosed by technical experts.

While corporatist political structures are becoming stronger and more prevalent,

7. *Business Week*, June 30, 1980, and Felix Rohatyn, "Reconstructing America," *New York Review of Books*, March 5, 1981, p. 20.

8. See Bob Jessop, "Capitalism and Democracy: The Best Possible Shell?" in G. Littlejohn, *et al.*, *Power and The State* (London, 1978).

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they are not replacing conventional legislative forms. Rather, these structures are partial in that they do not displace but exist alongside formally representative governmental institutions, bureaucratic administration, and interest group lobbying.[9] One important reason for this is the compatibility between corporatist democracy and the conviction, held by most neo-conservatives and supply-siders, that the most urgent task facing American society is reindustrialization.

Neo-conservative proponents of reindustrialization argue that quality of life concerns and the relatively high levels of public consumption they spawn must be subordinated to the revitalization of the infrastructure and capital goods base of the American economy. The dilemma this poses is how reindustrialization, with its aim of rapid and massive capital accumulation, can be accomplished given a substantial reduction in the quality of life or social welfare measures.[10] A government without authority, goes one of the major themes of neo-conservatism, is unable to impose necessary sacrifices on its people. Yet, for a long time, capitalist-democratic governments have rested their authority precisely on those measures which must now be reduced. Corporatist democracy seems to provide a way out of this dilemma in that it would assist in meeting the twin problems of governability besetting advanced capitalism by, first, facilitating a reduction of administrative overload and responsibility through a delegation of state power to the various functional groups and, second, to take the example of organized labor, fostering restraint through the transference of bargaining power from the local level to the national and, perhaps, by making corporate democratic participation contingent upon the repudiation of industrial action. Corporatist democratic institutions offer the possibility of satisfying the goals of lessened public consumption and reindustrialization.

Corporatist democracy is compatible with advanced capitalism, particularly in its present situation for, as Schmitter notes, it would relieve the state of decisional and implementational responsibility over "non-essential" questions such as health and welfare and allow it to concentrate on the "essential" matters of defense and economic revitalization. However, as resources devoted to quality of life or social welfare concerns decline, the number of marginal individuals and the amount of mass discontent will likely increase — and, of course, coercive measures to control both will proliferate.[11] The central question, then, is this: Is state coercion an integral feature of corporatism? Must all efforts at societal corporatism end in fascism? Is it likely that a fascism spawned by advanced capitalism would be a friendly fascism in contrast to the hostile, openly brutal fascism associated with the breakdown of liberal capitalism? Perhaps the best that can be said about these matters at this time is that "friendly corporatism" is a real possibility, but behind its smile will always be the bad breath of fascism — and fascism is never friendly.

Frank Hearn

9. See Leo Panitch, "Recent Theorizations of Corporatism: Reflection of a Growth Industry," *British Journal of Sociology*, 31:2 (1980).

10. See, for instance, Amatai Etzioni, "Social Progress vs. Economic Progress," *Social Policy*, March-April 1980.

11. On this point see Martin Oppenheimer and Jane C. Canning, "The National Security State: Repression Within Capitalism," *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*, 1978-79, p. 22.

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Herbert Marcuse. *The Aesthetic Dimension. Toward a Critique of Marxist Aesthetics.* Boston: Beacon Press, 1978. 88 plus xiii pages. $6.95.

Marcuse's last book and essay [1] are not his most exciting works. There is little in either that he has not said before, and the political quietude of *The Aesthetic Dimension* is troublesome. Yet, taken together, they complement each other. The worst tendencies in Marcuse's project — the "vague holism" and "nature romanticism" — are properly sublimated, and the best tendency, an uncompromising commitment to human happiness, remains. Marcuse's thought does not move comfortably between the claim to absolute freedom upheld by the aesthetic dimension and the political activism that leads him to embrace a disparate series of social movements as the possible vanguard of a revolution based upon the "new sensibility." However, his aesthetic and political impulses find their appropriate place in these last works. In *The Aesthetic Dimension*, he comes to terms with the fact that certain elements in his vision of liberation, particularly those pertaining to the "resurrection of nature," will never be realized. This frees him, in "Protosozialismus und Spätkapitalismus," to *attach* realizable versions of his vision of liberation to actual social movements. Yet, some of the old flaws in Marcuse's project remain. He rather uncritically lumps together a variety of social movements, such as women's liberation and "concerned scientists," which simply do not have the same emancipatory potential. [2] Furthermore, his interpretation of Bahro's *The Alternative*, much like his interpretation of Freud, is highly selective.[3] There is much in Bahro's book, such as the over-estimation of the emancipatory role of the functionary-intellectual, that is quietly ignored. Indeed, Marcuse appropriates a particular aspect of this work to overcome a theoretical dilemma that leads him to oscillate uncomfortably between the "aesthetic" and "political" poles of his project: the vicious circle arising from the socially constituted character of human needs. His progress in extricating himself is made possible by his retreat into the aesthetic dimension.

In a question-and-answer session following his 1967 address, "The End of Utopia," Marcuse stated that he simply did not know how to get out of the vicious circle: a genuinely free society may only be built by men and women with new needs; yet, such new men and women are hardly conceivable in the absence of a new society.[4] The failure of all previous revolutions, i.e., to have instituted an order as repressive of eros as the one they replaced, is accounted for by this dilemma.[5] This vicious circle accurately reflects a similar tension in reality. The new sensibility can only flourish under entirely different social relations. Yet, it must also be given the task of creating these relations, lest the revolution congeal into a political and economic enterprise unresponsive to the claims of eros. Such an outcome results because the task of building a revolution requires a commitment to hard work and sacrifice, and these

1. "Protosozialismus und Spätkapitalismus. Versuch einer revolutionstheoretische Synthese von Bahros Ansatz," in *Kritik*, VI:19 (Berlin: Verlag Olle & Wolter, 1978), pp. 5-27. Translated as "Protosocialism and Late Capitalism: Toward a Theoretical Synthesis Based on Bahro's Analysis," in *International Journal of Politics*, X:2-3 (White Plains, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, Inc.), pp. 25-48.

2. "Protosocialism," p. 32.

3. Rudolf Bahro, *The Alternative in Eastern Europe* (London: New Left Books, 1978), trans. David Fernbach, p. 80.

4. *Five Lectures* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970), pp. 62-82.

5. Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization* (New York: Random House, Vintage Books, 1962), pp. 15, 16.

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otherwise admirable traits do not fit in with the new sensibility. According to Wolfgang Fritz Haug's less generous interpretation of the vicious circle, it represents the pathos of Marcuse's project, in which the physical prerequisites of revolution, particularly the potential of creating abundance, are already in place.[6] It is man himself who stands in the way of revolution — a man who in his innermost being desperately wants the changes he himself opposes. In fact, such a man hardly exists. The vicious circle is actually an artifact of Marcuse's exaggeration of the baseness of the present order, combined with his exaggerated estimate of the instincts' potential to create an entirely new one. Marcuse leaves himself no way out of a situation otherwise full of holes.

However much the vicious circle has a basis in reality, Marcuse makes finding a way out all the more difficult. His vision of liberation is so extreme, involves such an enormous individual transformation, that any imaginable political revolution could hardly realize its promise. Marcuse can find no historical precedent for the type of revolution he has in mind. More problematic still is his failure to point to any social group that exhibits features of the society he desires: the replacement of the reality principle by the pleasure principle. If this were possible, it seems that somewhere there would be, for example, a primitive tribe with social relations governed by erotic rather than performance-based principles. Marcuse's one brief reference to the Arapesh is hardly compelling.[8] He advocates the replacement of the reality principle by the pleasure principle, not merely the former's "relaxation," which is all that is demonstrated in the brief quotation from Margaret Mead.[9]

Marcuse's concept of freedom is at the root of these difficulties. At least since 1933, he has argued that genuine freedom is absolute freedom.[10] It is ultimately freedom from the demands, indeed the laws, of nature itself.[11] This is revealed by his interpretation of the concept of labor. In labor man must subordinate his will to the requirements of the objective situation (Marcuse calls this the "law of the 'thing' "), no matter how social relations of labor are organized.[12] Only in play is genuine freedom possible, for it is in play that men and women may be free to make up their own rules of the game, their own natural laws, as it were. "In a player's single throw of a ball," Marcuse says, "lies an infinitely greater triumph over objectification than in the most enormous accomplishment of technical labor."[13] Play cancels the objectivity of things, replacing it with humanly created laws. For this reason it is the epitome of freedom.[14]

6. "Das Ganze und das ganz Andere. Zur Kritik der reinen revolutionären Transzendenz," in *Antworten auf Herbert Marcuse*, edited by Jürgen Habermas (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1968), pp. 60, 61.

7. Heide Berndt and Reimut Reiche, "Die geschichtliche Dimension des Realitätsprinzips," in *Antworten auf Herbert Marcuse, op.cit.*, pp. 130, 131.

8. *Eros and Civilization, op.cit.*, p. 197.

9. Margaret Mead, *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies* (New York: New American Library, Mentor Books, 1950), p. 100. Just 3 pages later Mead talks of the "distasteful and onerous" tasks imposed on the young men of the Arapesh for the sake of the larger community, including the establishment of "trade-partnerships with men of other communities" (p. 103). This is hardly life under the reign of the pleasure principle.

10. Cf. his "On the Philosophical Foundation of the Concept of Labor in Economics," in *Telos*, n. 16 (Summer, 1973), pp. 9-37.

11. *Ibid.*, pp. 14, 15.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

13. *Ibid.*, pp. 14, 15.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 14. Marcuse employs the term "labor" in this essay to also refer to man's activities in the "realm of freedom" (pp. 29-32; 35). However, he is not referring to man's "metabolism with nature," but to self-development outside the realm of actual labor. The term "labor" is used for both, but there can be no confusion regarding the entirely different contexts.

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It is common practice to trace Marcuse's apparently wavering position on the possibility of freedom within the realm of necessity. In *Reason and Revolution,* he wishes to abolish labor as "that activity which creates surplus value in commodity production, or which 'produces capital.' "[15] There is no suggestion that non-capitalist labor — labor as part of man's "metabolism" with nature — might also come to coincide with freedom. However, in "The End of Utopia," Marcuse does suggest that labor and freedom might converge,[16] but he never pursues this systematically. Whenever he uses terms that might suggest the convergence of labor and freedom, such as "erotic labor," he means feelings of friendship and solidarity among work groups. It is the purpose and not the content of an activity that marks it as work or play.[17] Thus, under erotic social relations, even digging ditches could be pleasurable. Yet, ditch-digging could be pleasurable only if it were done for its own sake. The purpose at issue here is only whether work is necessary. It is the necessity of work that makes it a constraint on human freedom, for it is necessity that requires men and women to subordinate their will to the demands of worldly objectivity. For Marcuse, the total alienation of labor remains the goal: "The more complete the alienation of labor, the greater the potential of freedom: total automation would be the optimum."[18]

In spite of a few twists and turns, Marcuse's view on the relation between labor and freedom is consistent. They are incompatible. To be sure, Marcuse wishes to humanize necessary labor. But this remains a palliative. There is no special program — other than the socialist tradition — to go with it. What remains unique about Marcuse's work is the long-term goal of abolishing labor. In Marcuse's later works the aesthetic dimension serves the same function as play in his 1933 article. In both, and only in art and play, is it possible to recast the social and natural world in the image of one's own imaginative vision of freedom. Only in such preserves, away from the demands of everyday life, does human will find no obstacle to its fulfillment.

Such a concept of freedom may be called a materialized version of the Hegelian absolute. In Marcuse's interpretation of Hegel, cognition and action are unfree because they are oriented toward a world not yet mastered. In this interpretation only pure thought is free, for thinking has no object but itself.[19] In Marcuse's version action replaces thought, but the idea remains: freedom can only be achieved when all constraint is eliminated.

In "Protosozialismus" Marcuse once again refers to the possibility of freedom appearing within the realm of necessity.[20] Here Marcuse develops a new understanding of the relation between freedom and necessity. He can appropriate aspects of Bahro's work to break out of the vicious circle because in *The Aesthetic Dimension* he reconciles himself to the fact that absolute freedom will not be realized in this world. In *One-Dimensional Man,* he had stated: "Science itself has rendered it possible to make final causes the proper domain of science... the transformation of values into needs, of final causes into technical possibilities is a new stage in the conquest of oppressive, unmastered forces in society as well as nature.... *Technology thus may provide the historical correction of the premature identification of Reason*

15. *Reason and Revolution* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1960), p. 293.
16. "The End of Utopia," *op.cit.,* p. 63.
17. *Eros and Civilization, op.cit.,* p. 196.
18. *Ibid.,* p. 142.
19. *Reason and Revolution, op.cit.,* p. 163.
20. "Protosocialism," p. 30.

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and Freedom."[21] At one point in Marcuse's project, science and technology were the means by which the materialized version of the Hegelian absolute would be realized. Men and women with "new" versions of these enterprises would remake the world so thoroughly that "Reason" and "Freedom" would finally coincide.[22] In *The Aesthetic Dimension*, Marcuse comes to terms with the fact that "the world was not made for the sake of the human being and it has not become more human" (p. 69). In so doing, he can discuss realistic possibilities by which labor might be made more free, and freedom might be made compatible with necessity.

It has been suggested that a proper understanding of aesthetics is possible only by taking into consideration the reception of a work of art by its audience. Others argue that to place all great art within the preserve of the aesthetic dimension sacrifices many of its most valuable qualities. Among these is its playfulness, which stems from the embeddedness of art in reality, as well as its remove from it. Oldenburg's "Lipstick Monument," a giant red lipstick mounted on top of a military tank, evinces this spirit of play, which makes light of reality, rather than merely transcending it. In so doing "pop art" may make reality more bearable, by denying some of its solemnity.[23] Such art may just as readily challenge objectivity as great art, in this case by making fun of it.

These issues cannot be considered here, where what is at stake is how Marcuse comes to terms with the failed promise of his most extreme vision of liberation. Art, he says, promises what it cannot deliver: the reversibility of time, the possibility that nature's objectivity and lawfulness can be conquered (p. 48). But while art cannot redeem its promise, the artistic catharsis can offer consolation in the face of the ultimate unrealizability of absolute freedom (pp. 58, 59). The catharsis is negative, not trivially affirmative. It does not lightly accept the facts. Yet, there is a puzzling aspect to Marcuse's treatment of artistic catharsis. He claims it is an ontological, not a psychological, event. It is based upon the specific qualities of the artistic form (p. 59). Clearly, Marcuse believes that the aesthetic dimension is not merely a human artifact but also possesses its own independent existence. Its truths would remain valid even if every human being on Earth were to forget them. It exists in its own right. It stands at the end of history, or beyond.

Yet, there may be a second consideration at work here as well. Marcuse is abandoning his doctrine of man-made ontological distinctions, which he has inconsistently held since his earliest works during his Heideggerian period. In his 1928 essay, Marcuse reiterates the classical division of the natural and social sciences, based upon the character of their objects.[24] According to Marcuse, it is possible to have a dialectical analysis of nature, in so far as this analysis is concerned with the historical relation between man and nature. But, this is not the same thing as natural science, and one must not confuse them as Engels' did. Science can treat nature independently of its human relevance precisely because the essence of nature is not historical. Nature remains external to man and his purposes. This, however, takes on new meaning in

21. *One-Dimensional Man* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964), pp. 232-234.

22. See Habermas's criticisms of Marcuse's "new science" in "Technology and Science as 'Ideology,'" in *Toward a Rational Society* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970), pp. 85-90.

23. Oldenburg claimed that the "Lipstick Monument" may have been seen by some as a tribute to Marcuse (it was erected in May, 1969, at the Hewitt Quadrangle at Yale University): "They talked about 800 foot monuments to Marcuse; I was talking about 24 foot monuments" (from an interview with Oldenburg by D. Shapiro, in *Art in America*, vol. 62, May 8, 1974, p. 56).

24. Cf. his "Contributions to a Phenomenology of Historical Materialism," in *Telos*, n. 4 (Fall, 1969), pp. 3-34.

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1931, in which Marcuse posits a more fundamental stratum of experience wherein this classical distinction is itself drawn into human history.[25] This is the basis of his extremely flexible understanding of ontological distinctions: they are ultimately manmade.

Marcuse explicates this fundamental stratum of experience by means of Dilthey's concept of life. In the course of Dilthey's work the concept of life changed. At first it was set against the domain of the natural sciences, and was defined in terms of meaning. However, as Dilthey came to be concerned with the movement of historical, not just individual, life, it began to encompass more and more of experience until life included human experience of nature, rather than being set against it. Thus, life came to take its meaning from itself, rather than simply by contrast to the concerns of natural science. This "itself" is the context of experience that gives meaning to the events of human life, which Marcuse calls "historicity": "Dilthey came upon the revelation of the historicity of the self-determination of life."[26]

Historicity is important because Marcuse, like Heidegger, uses that term to express the reality-constitutive importance of the subjective experience of history. This comes through most clearly in the 1928 essay that Schmidt calls a brilliant but falied attempt to unite two very different approaches: the phenomenological emphasis on the subjective experience of history, and the Marxist emphasis on objective historical factors.[27] In the course of Marcuse's work one can see an oscillation between these two views of history. More important for the purpose at hand is how the mixing of these two views allows Marcuse to argue that the natural world does indeed possess an objective existence governed by its own laws, and at the same time suggest that this objective existence may one day be so thoroughly penetrated by new social relations that it too would come to reflect these relations.[28]

Marcuse goes on to argue in 1931 that under the identification of the concept of life and historicity, traditional distinctions between man and world, history and nature, subjectivity and objectivity, take on a wholly different significance. With the establishment of society as the sole determinant of the process of historical development, it can be shown that these traditional distinctions achieve not only their meaning from the achieved level of philosophy and scientific progress, but also that their actual existence and form is determined by the level of development.[29]

Of course, traditional distinctions between subject and object, man and nature, change in the course of history. What is troublesome in both these essays, however, is Marcuse's tendency to see this process by which fundamental man-world distinctions are altered as an expression of an essence of historical progress itself, rather than basing it upon actual progress. This tendency is exacerbated by Marcuse's view of history as something that men and women experience as historical beings, rather than cause: as if, says Marcuse, history was something to be achieved![30] In later works, this leads to some wishful thinking regarding the limits of this process by which nature is drawn into history. In *An Essay on Liberation*, for example, the culmination of the

25. Cf. "Das Problem der geschichtlichen Wirklichkeit," in *Die Gesellschaft,* Vol. I (1931), pp. 350-367.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 361.

27. Alfred Schmidt, "Existential-Ontologie und historischer Materialismus bei Herbert Marcuse," in *Antworten auf Herbert Marcuse, op.cit.*, p. 27. For a critique of Schmidt, see Paul Piccone's review of *Antworten auf Herbert Marcuse*, in *Telos*, n. 3 (Spring, 1963), pp. 150-158.

28. Marcuse, *Counterrevolution and Revolt* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972), p. 65.

29. "Das Problem der geschichtlichen Wirklichkeit," *op.cit.*, pp. 363-365.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 361.

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essence of history is man's reconciliation with nature, by which he means that nature would be so thoroughly drawn into society that when men and women finally peered behind the "veil of nature" they would find themselves: "The rational transformation of the world could then lead to a reality formed by the aesthetic sensibility of man. Such a world could (in a literal sense!) embody, incorporate, the human faculties and desires to such an extent that they appear as part of the objective determinism of nature — coincidence of causality through nature and causality through freedom."[31]

The philosophical basis of this claim is that being itself would become erotic. The play of eros and death corresponds to the traditional metaphysical play of being and non-being. Thus, Marcuse returns to the problematic realm of manmade ontological distinctions. For Marcuse must struggle to make eros, which applies only to people, a general principle of being. So he argues that because inorganic matter is the end of the death instinct, it too is linked to human life.[32]

The notion that human life and the death instincts are the basis of all ontological dfistinctions raises some questions about the independent status of the natural world. However, it explains how a conventional epistemological distinction between the social and natural worlds in the 1928 essay can coexist, though perhaps not comfortably, with tendencies — stronger in Marcuse's later works — toward the reconciliation of man and nature, subject and object. In this process of reconciliation the most fundamental features of the world would themselves change. For these are in the last analysis an expression of the movement of societies in history.[33] Marcuse, however, backs away from this position in *Counterrevolution and Revolt*.[34] Some of Marcuse's claims regarding a "new science" of a new nature are notoriously cryptic. Sometimes it seems that the new science is merely ecology, and the new nature is one covered by parks and trees rather than parking lots. At other times he clearly means more.[35] In *The Aesthetic Dimension*, Marcuse clarifies his position.

That the aesthetic catharsis is ontological, not psychological, means that in the world of art, in the world of our imagination and deepest longings, and perhaps in Marcuse's own innermost hopes, the ultimate reconciliation with nature remains possible. At the same time, the form of art, characterized by its existence outside of history, possessing its own independent reality, tells us that this reconciliation is not to be realized in this world. The form of the promise cancels the promise, but not the hope that gave birth to it. The hope remains alive in the "new sensibility" (i.e., in psychological "space"), which can guide revolutionary practice. The cancellation of the promise is thus not trivially affirmative. It does not take the form of "But we knew it was impossible all along." The independence of the form of expression retains an

31. Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969), p. 31.

32. *Eros and Civilization, op.cit.*, p. 113.

33. It does not seem to me that it is very useful to defend this "historical" view of ontological distinctions on the basis of its "educational" function: that it serves to emphasize the reified character of certain traditional distinctions. Morton Schoolman, in "Introduction to Marcuse's 'On the Problem of the Dialectic'" in *Telos*, n. 27 (Spring, 1967), pp. 10-11, argues in this direction. One can certainly point out reified distinctions without suggesting that they were once ontologically based but need no longer be so.

34. *Counterrevolution and Revolt, op.cit.*, pp. 68, 69. Marcuse's position is hard to pin down. Just 3 pages earlier he is referring to the reconciliation with nature (p. 65).

35. What Marcuse means by a "new science" of a "new nature" has been the subject of several lively debates. See, for example, Robert D'Amico's review of William Leiss' *The Domination of Nature*, in *Telos*, vol. XV (Spring, 1973), pp. 142-147. Leiss argues that the attribution of "new science" tendencies to Marcuse is the result of taking a few quotes out of context. D'Amico responds with more quotes.

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element of negation. The truth of the reconciliation with nature as the furthest achievement of human freedom and happiness remains, but it will not be realized in this world.

Earlier Marcuse spoke of the convergence of technology and art, work and play. Now he emphasizes the two quite separate meanings of the term "art": it refers to technique, and to aesthetic form (p. 36). No longer is it technology itself that is expected to reveal man behind the veil of nature. Only in art as aesthetic form may men and women transform nature at will, and in this way find themselves behind its mere appearances. Yet, the form of art belies the content. Its very autonomy testifies to the fact that its truth will not be realized. It is this recognition, this catharsis, that enables Marcuse in his last essay to once again take up the problem of building a free society in this world. His fondest hopes do not disappear. The good society is still only conceivable on the basis of a "new sensibility." Yet, the vision is properly sublimated. Its most extreme forms are reconciled to the aesthetic dimension, which continues to illuminate paler, more shadowy but more realizable versions of the original forms.

Had *The Aesthetic Dimension* been Marcuse's last work it would have been more difficult, but not impossible, to come to terms with his project. His "nature romanticism" is properly sublimated, but the practical political dimension of his work is seemingly abandoned. This is expressed by the idea that art cannot deal with Auschwitz (pp. 55-56).[36] Art can only promise. It cannot deliver. It cannot explain the economic, social or psychological circumstances that led to Auschwitz. Neither can it outline a way of life that would prevent its recurrence. Art can only hint at the promise of happiness that must guide these practical enterprises in spirit.

"Protosozialismus" is about practice. The way out of the vicious circle turns out to be remarkably easy. Bahro's book, says Marcuse, implies that the socialist strategy must be essentially the same before and after the revolution. The cultural revolution implies the total transformation of society, but the subjects of the revolution must think and act today as they will after the revolution.[37] This is the only way out. What is most interesting about Marcuse's interpretation of Bahro is what he does not adopt. Without a word of criticism he quietly reinterprets several of Bahro's key theses.

In claiming that Bahro's analysis is applicable to advanced capitalism, Marcuse does not return to his earlier suggestion that a command economy may more readily be liberated as it may skip the social changes associated with the conversion of a market economy to socialism and immediately begin the necessary political changes: "the transfer of control from above to below."[38] Unlike Bahro, Marcuse does not think that Communist countries, in spite of their domination by a class of unresponsive functionaries, have taken a decisive step toward liberation not yet taken by the West. Indeed, Marcuse embraces the "space" created by the liberal democracies for free

36. Earlier, in *An Essay on Liberation*, Marcuse suggested art could deal with Auschwitz, by transforming the ugly and sad into beautiful form (p. 43). However, in *Counterrevolution and Revolt*, he explicitly rejects this. The task of the aesthetic image is to "eternalize" these horrible aspects of reality (p. 99). Marcuse holds to this position in *The Aesthetic Dimension*. This shift is of some importance as it suggests the aesthetic sensibility is no longer given the function of directly penetrating reality, in order to disclose the beautiful aspects of things independent of their "historical layers of sadness." For this understanding of the aesthetic sensibility, see "On Hedonism," in *Negations* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968), p. 171. Rather, the aesthetic sensibility operates entirely in its own dimension.

37. "Protosocialism," *op.cit.*, p. 34.

38. In *Soviet Marxism* (New York: Vintage Books, Random House, 1961), pp. 240-242.

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expression and social experimentation that Bahro rejects.[39] Bahro rejects such "experimental initiatives" because they must remain isolated. Marcuse, on the other hand, embraces the activities of "concerned scientists," and the women's liberation movement, precisely because it is only in relative isolation that such groups can develop an alternative consciousness, and liberated patterns of social interaction. Within the political mainstream the pressures of conformism and cooptation are too strong.

Conversely, Marcuse quitely revises Bahro's concept of the "collective intellectual." For Bahro, the "collective intellectual," while in principle coming from all classes within society, is primarily composed of intellectual functionaries who have rejected the party's distinction between socialism now and communism later, have replaced their "subaltern consciousness" with the new sensibility, and are oriented toward building a new communist organization outside of the existing party organization.[40] For Marcuse, on the other hand, the "collective intellectual" consists of the previously mentioned "catalyst groups." One could object that Marcuse is simply repeating old mistakes. He is attributing potentially revolutionary tendencies to such a potpourri that it becomes impossible to distinguish genuinely emancipatory tendencies from the expressive behavior of "bourgeois individualists." Yet, this time the story is not quite so simple.

Bahro spends a great deal of time discussing possibilities of freedom in the workplace. At first he talks of freedom and necessity running in tandem. This would be accomplished primarily by the "deverticalization" of the division of labor, in which workers would participate in a systematic fashion in production planning, including planning for the sharing of as much routine and unfulfilling labor as possible.[41] Later, Bahro talks of freedom within the realm of necessity, i.e., within the factory itself. This would be accomplished in large measure by the integration of free unions with communes, the latter being understood as "complex territorial units that embrace the process of social life in its all-round character" — e.g., the family, recreational associations, and the like.[42] The function of the state would wither under this arrangement, but not disappear. It would be necessary to coordinate the production process, and to prevent communal selfishness from merely replacing individual selfishness.

Marcuse likes much of what Bahro has to say about labor in a free society. Indeed, it is in this context that some of the old themes reappear. The "deverticalization" of the division of labor could so reorganize necessary labor time that the realm of freedom might indeed, says Marcuse, appear within the realm of necessity.[43] However, he does not elaborate. More comprehensible is Marcuse's appreciation of what he calls "the economy of time" in which increased time from labor is seen as absolutely essential to the development of the new sensibility. The dream of absolute freedom, it appears, is now but an empty shell. Its living substance resides in the aesthetic dimension. The appearance of freedom in necessity, in the sense that Marcuse previously intended, is but a phrase. The achievement of more free time, coupled with the humanization of necessary labor (e.g., the sharing of mundane tasks), seems to be the goal of practice — a goal that Marcuse no longer considers merely incomplete. Much of this essay may

39. "Protosocialism," *op.cit.*, p. 46; Bahro, *op.cit.*, p. 360.
40. Bahro, pp. 13, 14, and passim.
41. Bahro, *op.cit.*, p. 297.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 440.
43. "Protosocialism," *op.cit.*, p. 30.

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be read simply as Marcuse's appreciation of an author who has taken great pains to construct a detailed picture of a practically realizable emancipated society, and yet who has not forgotten the importance of the "Inward Voyage" in creating the psychological conditions necessary for its realization.

Yet, to read this essay only as Marcuse's tribute to an author who has under surprising biographical and political circumstances adopted many of Marcuse's own themes, albeit in a profoundly eclectic manner, would be mistaken.[44] It would also be mistaken to simply praise Marcuse's tacit rejection of the "centralist" tendencies in Bahro's work, such as Bahro's overestimation of the emancipatory function of the "collective intellectual."[45] What is important about this essay is Marcuse's appreciation that protest, experiment, and reform "on a local and regional basis" not only may not be swallowed up by the existing order, but constitute the only way out of the vicious circle. This is because it is only on such a scale that large numbers of individuals may actually experience the freedom and possibilities for self-determination that give rise to the new sensibility. Only personal experience, says Marcuse, causes people to see the world in a new way. It is the experience of freedom within catalyst groups that allows individuals to recognize that the massive givenness of reality is in large measure contingent. Only experience possesses the power of demystification.[46]

We must be careful, says Marcuse, not to make a virtue of necessity. The relative isolation of catalyst groups means that they will be less effective in the short run in challenging the existing order than mass movements. Nevertheless, Marcuse's position seems to be "Let a thousand catalyst groups bloom!" Not because disorder is itself a revolutionary virtue, but because the end of the revolution can only be anticipated in its beginnings if individuals are free to define their own problems and needs — free not only from the ideology of the modern industrial state, but also from the tutelage of the "collective intellectual." In rejecting the role of the collective intellectual, Marcuse is not, of course, rejecting the role of intellectuals. They remain central.[47] What he is rejecting is the notion that they could provide centralized leadership. Their appropriate role is with the various catalyst groups. Intellectuals too must experience the new sensibility. Today this is only imaginable on a small scale, where relative freedom of movement and space for experimentation exists.

In several of his earlier books Marcuse's search for a possible revolutionary subject was somewhat pathetic. The problem was seen almost exclusively in terms of discovering small groups within the oppressive totality that somehow exhibit the new sensibility, such as a rejection of the "fetish of cleanliness." The role or function of these groups in the revolution was virtually incomprehensible, although Marcuse did

44. Actually, there are as many phrases reminiscent of Habermas' work as there are of Marcuse. See, for example, pp. 365-368.

45. Andrew Arato and Mihaly Vajda, in "The Limits of the Leninist Opposition: Reply to David Bathrick," *New German Critique*, n. 19 (Winter, 1980), p. 174, put it very well: "The more down-to-earth proposals of Bahro, in spite of himself, presuppose the existing structure of the GDR or its replacement by its twin brother. In between negative utopia and miserable reality ought to lie a road of radical structural reform of counter institutions and public spheres, of constitutional and civil rights, the road to Poland, Hungary and in terms of the last Czechoslovakia. But all this must seem hopelessly Western, hopelessly *bundesrepublikanisch* to Bahro, and he is not interested in any of it."

46. "Protosocialism," *op.cit.*, p. 45.

47. *Ibid.*, pp. 28-29. Some of the older themes, however, remain. Marcuse believes the intellectuals must function as a source of authority. They are not merely an "intellectual resource" for catalyst groups.

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not expect them to be its vanguard.[48] Apparently these groups evince tendencies in the existing society that might not be contained under quite different objective circumstances.

Marcuse's treatment of the revolutionary subject in "Protosozialismus" is more sophisticated. An analysis of the process by which the new sensibility can be developed within a number of different issue-oriented groups replaces the search for its spontaneous fragmentary manifestation. The revolutionary subjects must have their own house in order before it even makes sense to talk of revolution. Otherwise the vicious circle will simply recur, even should they gain power. This new treatment of the revolutionary subject implies the possibility of genuinely emancipatory evolutionary change. Local and regional activities of catalyst groups, says Marcuse, do more than merely anticipate the crumbling away of the system. In conjunction with a number of structural problems that plague industrial societies, such groups may actually contribute to the withering away of the central state, as more and more of its functions are taken over by autonomous groups.

To be sure, this possibility is only an undeveloped hint in "Protosozialismus." An analysis of how it might actually occur remains outstanding, although Bahro's book does offer a number of suggestions in this direction. What is genuinely interesting about this hint is that it suggests how Marcuse begins in this essay to overcome the all-too-rigid distinction between the oppressive totality and the totally different society that could replace it. The way out of the vicious circle, that the end of the revolution must be anticipated in its beginnings, implies that the distance between the oppressive totality and the totally different may be reduced by a number of small steps, not merely by a cataclysmic leap.

The easiest thing to say about "Protosozialismus" is that its optimism regarding possibilities for meaningful social change stands in refreshing and perhaps surprising contrast to the resignation of *The Aesthetic Dimension*. More important, though more difficult to specify, is that so many of Marcuse's most challenging ideas now seem more applicable than ever before. It is as though Bahro's work provided a skeleton to which Marcuse could attach his own ideas to give them realizable form. It is as though Marcuse came to terms with some unpleasant realities in *The Aesthetic Dimension*. In so doing, he freed himself to attach his vision to what he regards as a catalog of suggestions regarding the actual organization of the good society. It is unfortunate that Marcuse did not take up Bahro's work in Bahro's own terms. However, he did integrate Bahro's catalog into the structure of his own project, in order to begin to overcome its outstanding theoretical deficit: the vicious circle, which has led to so much unwarranted resignation. No assessment of Marcuse's work that fails to take seriously this last step can be complete.

C. Fred Alford

48. "The End of Utopia," *op.cit.*, p. 69.

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Susan Sontag. *Under the Sign of Saturn*. New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1980. $10.95.

At times the literary odyssey of Susan Sontag can inspire fidelity, because she often avoids the pedestrian and is never irrelevant. Concerned with more than idle erudition, she is one of the few American critics with a political consciousness and a theoretical awareness generally taken for granted by continental thinkers. Her intellectual ascendency has occurred in polemical situations and in spite of false starts. For the right, she is a favorite target, because she has been a moving advocate of alternative modes, from the politically emancipatory to the culturally progressive. Sometimes her criticism has a pressing social immediacy at odds with the lotus-eating ahistoricism pervading the arts and letters. At its best, her literary criticism has a sensitive breadth both uniquely insightful yet generally pertinent. Her most incisive essays — particularly those on posters, photographs, and North Vietnam — have perceptions so penetrating that they become theoretically expansive.

Conversely, however, Susan Sontag's other essays, such as those in *Against Interpretation* (1966), consist of randomly topical percepts which lead nowhere, except to neo-Weltschmerz. In affirming nothing beyond themselves, these essays merely endorse what *is*, however reluctantly. Sontag's worst articles are constricted by a conceptual framework which, not unlike positivism, culminates in an ideology of personal indulgence rather than one of social liberation. Such is unfortunately the case with her latest collection of essays, *Under the Sign of Saturn* (1980). With the exception of her fine discussion of Artaud, these essays lack any critical rigour and are little more than modes for a-social contemplation.

The critics, writers, and filmmakers discussed in this anthology are clearly used to chart Sontag's own intellectual horizon. In particular, the reader is encouraged by an immodest jacket cover to compare Sontag, proclaimed the best critic of our time, with Walter Benjamin, who is hailed as the most important critic of his era. This analogy has been enhanced by the title of this collection of seven essays, since it is taken from the one about Benjamin. Such a comparison would be misconceived even if Sontag's discussions of posters or photography were being considered. Seen with regard to Sontag's hackneyed effort to turn Benjamin into a delicately a-political and eccentric intellectual, such a comparison would be unlikely, except in the hard-sell world of advertising where remunerative equivalents are necessary.

Sontag begins her essay on Benjamin with the clever device of describing his image as mechanically reproduced in some photographs. From there, however, her essay retrogresses steadily, because her methodology turns out to be a mere catalogue of thinly descriptive remarks on why Benjamin was a classic example of the melancholic temperaments so cherished by Renaissance humanists. With a litany of platitudes right out of Vasari, Sontag writes that Benjamin, the Saturnine melancholic, was a truly "unique" individual because: "The need to be solitary. . . is characteristic of the melancholic"; "The style of work of the melancholic is immersion, total concentration"; "Dissimulation, secretiveness appear a necessity to the melancholic"; ". . . it is melancholics who best know how to read the world"; [Benjamin had a] "longing to be superior"; *etc., etc.*

This tired Renaissance conceit, here inexplicably elevated to a conceptual mode, is never grounded contextually by Sontag. As such, the pseudo-psychoanalytic melancholic character type becomes an a-historical characterization of which Benjamin — for whom Sontag says "time is irrelevant" — is the grandest exemplar.

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Her essay involves no thinking to the second power, no self-reflexive turn, no meta-critical dimension which, in being a critique of *why* the melancholic device is used in certain periods, would divulge more profound dimensions of meaning. Instead Sontag applies this physiological reductionism without any self-critical stringency.

The methodological precedent for Sontag's essay is not the "historical materialism" Benjamin claimed to use, but the very Gundolfian biographical description found in such painfully typical studies as *Born Under Saturn* (1963) by Rudolf and Margot Wittkower. Naively coupling traditional humanism (and its a priori notion of transcendental individuals) with an empirically strict historicism (and its disavowal of any such a priori notions), the Wittkowers are well-suited for their a-social aim of distinguishing artists from "normal" people. *Born Under Saturn* documents the Renaissance development wherein Saturn, the planet for melancholics, was first connected to artists. The Wittkowers note that in the fifteenth century Marsilio Ficino reconciled Aristotle's theory of melancholy first with Plato's notion of artistic madness and then with the astrological sign of Saturn: "From then on even moderately gifted men were characterized as saturine" so that in the "sixteenth century a wave of 'melancholic behavior' swept across Europe."[1] This pretentious characterization was an ever-recurrent *topos* in humanist letters. By the Baroque period, this literary conceit had gone out of fashion, although it was revived during the Romantic period. Today the phrase "saturnine melancholic" is a one-dimensional shibboleth, as naive as it is escapist.

The tragedy is not merely that Sontag uses a cliché beloved by academicians, but that she also fails to develop the few psychological insights this conceit offers for Benjamin's life. Even though Benjamin's own passing references to the saturnine melancholic are hardly profound, there is a sense in which this metaphor has significant implications for his own thought. Far from being just the sign of genius, Saturn was also the Star of Israel, with St. Augustine being the first to consider Saturn the god of the Jews.[2] Just as the partiarchal Saturn was replaced by Zeus, so the Christians contended they had similarly superceded the Jews. It is probably this unacknowledged oedipal dimension to the saturnine figure which was important for Benjamin's own view of himself. As an *homme de lettres* and a private collector, Benjamin saw himself as one whose social role would be "dethroned" in the transition from capitalism to socialism. On several occasions, Benjamin noted that things are fully understood only when they become outmoded. In particular, he felt that when the *homme de lettres* was transcended by a more *whole* social type, people would be able to appreciate what this old role itself had been. Whether consciously or unconsciously, Benjamin's use of the saturnine metaphor was an oedipal-charged analogy for his own expected "overthrow," because: "as Hegel put it, only when it is dark does the owl of Minerva begin its flight. Only in its extinction is the collector comprehended."[3]

Under no circumstances could one plausibly contend, as Sontag tries to, that Benjamin felt "everything valuable was the last of its kind." While Benjamin did see value in what was the last of its kind, he unquestionably valued more what he felt was

1. Rudolph and Margot Wittkower, *Born Under Saturn* (New York, 1969), pp. 102-106.
2. Eric Zafran, "Saturn and the Jews," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, Vol. XLII (1979), pp. 16-27. Benjamin's own comments on the saturnine melancholic occur in his *Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiels* (1928), trans. John Osborne (London, 1977), pp. 145-158.
3. Walter Benjamin, "Unpacking My Library" (1931), trans. Harry Zohn, in *Illuminations* (new York, 1968), p. 67.

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to be the first of its kind in the aftermath of capitalism. To a large extent, he remains important because he continually took the future into account. Thus, for Benjamin the saturnine type, with all that it implies in the way of social distance, would face the same de-reification as the arts, which would be rendered post-auratic. Ironically, Sontag undermines Benjamin's significance by relegating him merely to a champion of "the life of letters." Her position unwittingly turns Benjamin into a political dilettante and, perhaps more wittingly, helps endow Benjamin with the auratic approval of the status quo. In 1950, Adorno tried to restore Benjamin's shock value, because as he noted, Benjamin's nimbus has remained that of the sophisticated "literator."[4] In 1980, Sontag has, with the help of liberal humanists like Hannah Arendt and George Steiner, recrowned Benjamin with this belletristic nimbus, thus making him safe for the Academy and for further cultural appropriation.

Sontag's characterization of Benjamin's methodology is as inadequate as her hagiographic description of him. In spite of Benjamin's brilliant defense of how Dada and Epic Theater attacked "contemplative immersion as a mode of a-social conduct,"[5] Sontag makes the neo-Kantian claim that Benjamin used art, especially in miniature, "as an object of disinterested contemplation." She further connects this misconception to the tenuous but self-congratulatory remark that Benjamin "understood the importance of being against interpretation." This is much too restrictive, since Benjamin never felt the issue was merely a conclusive against an inconclusive approach, to interpret or not to interpret. While he was against "conclusive" interpretations which claimed to preclude all future interpretations, thus setting themselves up as absolute, he was *not* "Against interpretation." Unlike Sontag, Benjamin viewed criticism as a means of extending art by consummatively "finishing" it. He never posited a notion of the art work as intrinsically meaningful in some a-historical, empirically verifiable sense. As Adorno has observed, Benjamin's criticism was not based on a notion of truth as a timeless universal, but rather as something yielded only *through* history.

Benjamin sought to eliminate all overt commentary, thus allowing the meanings to emerge through a shocking montage of the material. His aim was, according to Adorno, not merely for philosophy to catch up to surrealism, but to become surrealistic. This critical strategy of Benjamin's is handled poorly by Sontag. She claims that Benjamin's approach embraced the contradictory concerns of a "surrealist inspired eye" for the ephemeral with a "loyalty to the traditional canon of learned taste." This view drastically reduces the scope of his criticism, even as it delimits each of these concerns individually. Sontag's use of the surreal as the middle class fetishism of the grotesque is hardly connected to Benjamin's own appreciation of the aesthetically incongruous, whose shock value he felt would de-fetishize art.[6] Similarly, Benjamin was never loyal to "learned taste" and he disavowed any interest in fostering a love of literature. A sensitive understanding of the connections between Benjamin the Marxist revolutionary and Benjamin the antiquarian has been achieved by John Berger: in Benjamin the antiquarian and the revolutionary were compatible in their rejections of the present as given and in their assumptions of historical tasks.[7]

4. T.W. Adorno, "Charakteristik Walter Benjamins," *Prismen: Kulturkritik und Gesellschaft* (Frankfurt, 1955), p. 287.

5. Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (1936), trans. H. Zohn, in *Illuminations* (New York, 1977), p. 237.

6. Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (new York, 1977), p. 54.

7. John Berger, "Walter Benjamin" (1970), *The Look of Things* (London, 1970), p. 89.

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A more important essay by Sontag is her famous critique of Leni Riefenstahl's work. In "Fascinating Fascism" (1974) Sontag reverses her earlier position, which led her to praise the *Triumph of the Will* as a masterpiece transcending Nazi propaganda. No longer adopting a "purely" formalist view, as she did in 1965, Sontag perceptively discloses the unacknowledged continuity between Riefenstahl's fascist and post-fascist work. In discussing Riefenstahl's book of photographs, *The Last of the Nuba*, Sontag demonstrates the retention of a fascist value system both in the selection of the subject and in the way it is glorified: a tribe exemplifying racial purity, body worship, patriarchal domination, pristine ritualism, and indifference to the intellect. Sontag also dissects the biographical sketch on the jacket cover of the book in order to counter to what she terms the "de-Nazification" of Riefenstahl as an apolitical lover of beauty. As such, she effectively discredits glib formalists, like Jonas Mekas, who view Riefenstahl merely as an aesthete in pursuit of the beautiful.

Nevertheless, Sontag ends up taking a very implausible position concerning Riefenstahl when she ultimately proclaims *Triumph of the Will* and *Olympia* "superb films." Since she has disallowed such a view merely on formalist grounds, Sontag argues that Riefenstahl's films are effective because their content is "a romantic ideal." She claims this ideal content is there as a testimony that the Nazis did *not* stand merely for brutishness and terror. According to her, fascism also stands for ideals that still persist: those involving life as art, ecstatic feelings of community, and the family of man. Unfortunately, Sontag has obviously not assimilated the aesthetic insights of George Grosz and Hon Heartfield — particularly, Heartfield's photomontage called *Mimicry* — or the theoretical critique of fascism by Herbert Marcuse.[8] Thus, she inexplicably confuses the propagandized ideals in these films with the utterly antithetical ideals the Nazis themselves professed *and realized*. Who, having read Hitler's *Mein Kampf* (or the writings by Alfred Rosenberg and Carl Schmitt), would ever seriously believe that the doctrine of racial purity had anything to do with the "family of man," that the utter subordination of art to propaganda had any real link with "life as art," that the destruction of internationalism by a folkish world view based on the aristocratic idea of Nature had anything to do with genuine "feelings of community"? Only the most superficial liberality could allow someone to say that fascism "stands for" these ideals, when the fascists themselves always stated the need to stand against such things as the "family of man."

Triumph of the Will is *not* a superb film precisely because its formal affirmation of beauty is inextricably connected to a code of bestial negation — a code all the more insidious because it is euphemistically transformed by a language of formal affirmation. As Benjamin noted in 1934, the archaic bifurcation of form and content in art is no longer tenable. A significant work is one which synthesizes tendency and technique (or content and form), because while tendency and technique are not synonymous, they are also not independent of each other. As such, Riefenstahl's film is eviscerated by an internal conflict between a technique that affirms and a tendency that cannot, a form that appears life enhancing and a content that leads only to destruction. Far from being a cohesive work, *Triumph of the Will* expresses an irreconcilable split that can only be self-destructive.

Sontag's position is untenable precisely because she does not go beyond the archaic separation of form and content. In 1965 she maintained that the formal dimension

8. Herbert Marcuse, *Reason and Revolution* (New York, 1954). As Marcuse notes, fascists like Franz Bohm attacked Hegel's "Universalistic conception" of humanity, as irreconcilable with their own view.

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alone mattered; in 1974 she contends that the content itself, quite aside from its formal virtuosity, is most significant. In neither review, however, does Sontag confront this film with the critical framework of Benjamin or Adorno. In both essays she posits a division, rather than a synthetic interdependence, between various dimensions of the film. Underlying her position are such old humanist pretenses as the "objective" knowledge of discreet entities (quite aside from their "impure" context) and the "disinterested" encounter with things (in spite of everything we know about perception as a "lived experience"). Unfortunately, the "objectivity" of liberal humanism permits a defense, in Riefenstahl's case and others, of what the self-reflexive viewpoint never could. Yet, in defending such films as *Triumph of the Will*, liberal humanism clearly contradicts the neutrality its "objective" approach supposedly seeks. In Sontag's review a libertarian aesthetic enslaves itself, because of a narrow antinomy defining liberty that constricts its own free use.

Sontag's discussion of fascism as a "romantic ideal" is not repeated in her essay on Hans-Jürgen Syberberg's *Hitler, a film from Germany*. Rather than seeing fascism again as a seductive ideal for humanity, Sontag takes the position that fascism has discredited all human ideal. She argues that Syberberg has shown how fascism disallows any "utopian" thinking. Needless to say, Sontag never explains why utopian thinking — significantly redefined by Marcuse as the projection of egalitarian views applicable to *all* humanity and premised on the liberated use of the modes of production — has anything in common with the sectarian regression of fascism, which seeks none of the things Marcuse refuses to renounce. Perhaps, thinking of Bernard Henri-Lévy, probably haunted by the crude thesis of Sir Karl Popper, Sontag rejects what is, yet disavows the possibility of thinking that things could be emphatically otherwise: "If Hitler is also a 'utopian,' as Syberberg calls him, then Syberberg is condemned to be a post-utopian."

In light of her own increasingly Weltschmerz sensibility, Sontag not surprisingly claims that Syberberg's film is a masterpiece. One claim is that Syberberg works in "an impersonal melancholic style." Furthermore, he has supposedly taken modernism to an "undreamed of scale" worthy of Wagnerian exhaustiveness — an argument which overlooks current discussions about the post-modernist period we have been in for several years. Furthermore, Sontag praises Syberberg's use of the "Surrealist landscape" in his film, because it is "hopeless, obsessional and finally self-regarding." Since the issue of surrealism in art is a very complex one, as the critique of Sartre and Adorno aptly show, an unqualified use of the surrealist technique is hardly adequate. Sontag herself has very intelligently shown this in *On Photography*, where she criticizes surrealism as a "bourgeois disaffection" characterized by "undialectical" and "libertarian rhetoric" (pp. 51, 54). In this respect, her praise of Syberberg's surrealist devices seems either self-contradictory, if she has retained her earlier view, or self-revealing, if she has not.

Equally disconcerting is Sontag's comparison of Syberberg's film with *2001*, which she cites approvingly. In her essay on Leni Riefenstahl, however, Sontag referred to *2001* as a film which, like Walt Disney's *Fantasia*, strikingly exemplifies "certain formal structures and themes of fascist art." Her divergent references to *2001*, without any qualifications, show a lack of critical stringency. It is not, therefore, surprising that Sontag would praise Syberberg's belief in "the sovereignty of imagination," or that she would accuse him of showing "not a shred of feminist awareness" and not the least interest in "Marxist analysis."

Sontag's vision of individuality receives its apotheosis in the short piece on Roland

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Barthes, written after his death in 1980. In prose of rococo delicacy, she praises Barthes' "dainty meditation on the personal." She compares him to Henry James and then defends this exquisite pedigree because Barthes became "a voluptuary of the mind" seductively "irresponsible, playful, formalist," who, as a "taxonomist of jubilation" enjoyed the "considerable sexual privileges" his fame afforded him. In other words, Roland Barthes was "great" because he enjoyed life. It hardly needs adding, however, that the other Barthes (about whom Sontag once wrote)[9] is totally ignored in favor of the Barthes who became an a-political aesthete. In spite of her interest in making Barthes look admirable at his death, however, Sontag has succeeded in making Barthes's later career disgustingly trivial and ironically posthumous. The significant Barthes, the author of *Mythologies* and *Writing Degree Zero*, was also a critic of profound negativity, whose sophisticated polemics against modern society and for writers unaccepted by it remain examples of his intellectual subtlety. This Barthes cannot be so easily forgotten, which is one reason Sontag had to cover him up by his later development.

The underlying theme of Sontag's anthology is clearly divulged in her short homages to Elias Canetti, that "genuine hero" and "reclusive eccentric," and to Paul Goodman who, as her favorite American writer, best formulated the "anarchist view. . . a form of conservative, humanistic thinking." As should be clear by now, Sontag's *Under the Sign of Saturn* is a sustained effort to recycle the old liberal ideal of eccentricity. She either tries to make these figures into eccentrics (Benjamin), or praises them for already being eccentrics (Canetti). At issue here is John Stuart Mill's topical view that genius is directly proportional to eccentricity, that the "individual" is somehow cut-off from "the masses" for reasons that are beyond control (*even* for "geniuses"). The only two figures in Sontag's book who resist being turned into eccentrics are Artaud, whose almost savage alienation lacked the gentility necessary for eccentricity, and Riefenstahl, who obviously made propaganda for popular consumption. Although she is certainly correct in saying so, Sontag's interest in showing that Riefenstahl was not an isolated aesthete is self-revealing. As late as 1978, Sontag claimed to be on the left because of her concern with transforming society in a profound way.[10] In such books as *Under the Sign of Saturn*, however, her position presupposes a return to traditional liberalism -- a liberalism whose bankruptcy can appeal only to melancholics already in need of sorrow.

David Craven

9. Susan Sontag, "Preface" (1968) for Roland Barthes, *Writing Degree Zero* (1953), trans. A. Lavers and C. Smith (Boston, 1968). Sontag's preface is an excellent look at the political commitment entailed in this work. She does an effective job in locating the complex content of this book.

10. Susan Sontag, "La Dissidence Vue des USA (Entretien avec Guy Scarpetta)," *Tel Quel*, n. 76 (Summer, 1978), pp. 71-77. In the course of the interview, Sontag contends: "Je veux en un certain sens rester marxiste." But in her very limited characterization of the possible positions open in contemporary society, she indirectly discloses her own recent development. We are now faced, she states, with two options concerning our society: "le nihilisme et la consummation" (p. 77). Apparently she has sided with Nietzsche in picking the former.

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George Schwab, editor. *Eurocommunism — The Ideological and Political-Theoretical Foundations.* Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1981. 325 pages. $25.00.

After juxtaposing the garbled title of this volume with its generally irrelevant and superficial contents, the reader will immediately suspect that still another academic press has thrown quality to the wind and decided to cash in quickly on the one European political phenomenon of the past half decade, before Poland, which caught the attention of informed American public opinion. The task was relatively easy, as no original scholarly essays had to be commissioned. Instead, Greenwood Press simply recycled papers delivered at what would appear to have been a rather dismal conference at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York in October 1978.

The book allegedly deals with Eurocommunism, commonly understood to denote revised concepts and strategies advanced by the communist parties of Italy, Spain and France, yet four of the nine essays deal with non-Eurocommunist cases (two on Yugoslavia, and one each on Portugal and West Germany). Italy, usually seen as the very center of Eurocommunism, merits but one essay. Wandering beyond a conventionally defined domain would certainly have been permissible had such meanderings shed some light upon the phenomenon itself, rather than upon the specificities of side trails, but even this was not the case. As if it were not burdensome enough that the geographic or conceptual domain of Eurocommunism is never specified, still worse is the fact that none of the essays delivers on what is promised by the somewhat redundant and pretentious title, itself a reflection of the confusion lurking beneath the surface gloss. That Eurocommunism actually possesses any rigorous "ideological and political-theoretical foundations" is at best a dubious proposition, yet to the limited degree that the various authors discuss theoretical elaborations, we discover, contrary to expectations, that it is either orthodox Marxist-Leninism in drag or Yugoslav Marxism triumphantly making its way from the Adriatic to the Mediterranean. In fact, pretenses aside, the reader is hard pressed to find any theoretical discussion of Eurocommunism whatsoever, aside from its tangential affinity with the *Praxis* critique of "really existing socialism," unenlightening allusions to Gramsci, and occasional references to Carrillo's largely atheoretical *Eurocommunism and the State.* This is not to say that no interesting theoretical questions could be posed regarding Eurocommunism; indeed, such critiques have been made by Bobbio, Salvadori, Colletti, Castoriadis, and others.

Predictably, however, no references are made to these or to attempted responses by communist theoreticians. The low level of theoretical discussion may be seen in Bernard E. Brown's summary definition of Eurocommunism, after 310 pages of wandering in a conceptual desert: "(1) the notion of class struggle and of the hegemony of the working class in guiding the entire society towards socialism; (2) the notion that only one party — the communist party — expresses the interests of the working class and is capable of leading it; (3) the notion that the vanguard party — the *only* party of the working class — must be organized 'effectively' so as to be able to defend workers' interests and achieve socialism (the principle of democratic centralism); and (4) the notion that the vanguard party, through its scientific analysis of society, has superior knowledge." Apparently little has changed since the gloomiest days of the Comintern except tactics; for Brown the foundations — scientific socialism, vanguardism and democratic centralism — remain unaltered. He thus assures us that "the time is not yet ripe — and never will be — for the entry of John

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Stuart Mill into the galaxy of communist superstars." Is this all that new?

The Yugoslav connection fares no better. Indeed, one wonders why Yugoslavia merits two essays to Italy's one. Neither theoretically nor practically has it been prominent in Eurocommunist literature. Theoretically, Eurocommunism is mainly an extension of the mature *Prison Notebooks,* particularly Gramsci's reflections on the distinctiveness of Western state-civil society relationships, not *Praxis,* whose concerns have centered on a critique of East European societies based on Marx's theory of alienation; practically, Eurocommunists have not stressed workers' self-management nor have they counterposed Yugoslavia as a model to the Russian "anti-model." Whereas *Praxis* has criticized market mechanisms and their incompatibility with socialist organization, Eurocommunist economists such as Giorgio Napolitano have argued that market mechanisms are fully compatible, indeed, indispensable, for socialist tradition.

One of the Yugoslav essays is by Rudi Supek, a well-known *Praxis* spokesperson. Supek defends *Praxis* against Stalinist charges of right revisionism which, implicitly, would extend to Eurocommunism as well, to the degree that the latter rejects orthodox Marxist-Leninism, as well as the Eastern model of "really existing socialism." Taken by itself, this is a fine essay but has little to do with Eurocommunism as such. The other essay on Yugoslavia, by R.V. Burks, an old Radio Free Europe hand, is a total disaster. The fact that he continually refers to the PCI as the CPI and alludes to Gramsci's death "in prison" indicates immediately that he knows very little about Italy (which is allegedly compared to Yugoslavia), a suspicion fully confirmed by an examination of his footnotes as well as the superficiality of his argument. Burks continually relies on undocumented statements, such as "Eurocommunists assert" this or that, and argues, without any substantiation, that "The *Praxis* advocates seem likely to play greater roles in the ideological turmoil that besets the Western parties than those played by any other school." What, then, is the analogy between the Italian and Yugoslav cases? "The conversion of the CPI to parliamentary democracy and social pluralism is analogous to the introduction of worker self-management in Yugoslavia in the sense of being the fundamental doctrinal change that made possible the expansion of the party's popular base. The practice of seeking a universal *presence* is the analogy of the CPY's greater reliance on market forces in the sense that the erection of a special barrier to middle-class fascism is an effort to stabilize the system as a whole, as is the attempt to raise the productivity of Yugoslav industry to world standards. Finally, the Italian road to socialism is the counterpart of the Yugoslav policy of non-alignment." Yes, and Yugoslav coffee (actually Turkish) is the counterpart to espresso. . .we've finally cut through all the mystification.

The essays on France by Brown and Krigel raise no theoretical questions and fail to go beyond the standard literature on the PCF. Given the object of analysis, this might be excusable, as the PCF has little in theory or practice to distinguish itself (except negatively), as indicated in the recent presidential election — to say nothing of its initial support for Russia's "fraternal help" in Afghanistan, its racist attacks on immigrant workers and the consistent cretinism of Georges Marchais. Franco Ferrarotti has no such excuse in attempting to say something of significance about Italy and the PCI. He simply recycled the same paper he has given at any number of similar conferences, one which reads far worse than when delivered orally with all of Ferrarotti's considerable charm and *italianità*. In essence, he reviews the ideological development of the PCI from Gramsci through Togliatti, and then relates this to Eurocommunism in general and the PCF in particular. "The French communist party

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has never had a Gramsci. It has Louis Althusser." Actually, there is more to this than meets the eye, but Ferrarotti chose to tell a fairy tale rather than bring his considerable analytic skills to bear upon what should have been the one essay to seriously deal with Eurocommunism's "ideological and theoretical-political foundations."

There are two essays on Spain. The first is an excellent political history of the PCE by Jujal-Léon which, while theoretically thin, is helpful in understanding the party's long-term relationship with the Soviet Union, as well as Carrillo's conflicts with such prominent PCE figures as Ibarruri, Anton, Claudin and Semprun. The second essay is a sociological profile of the PCE by Juan Linz which substitutes randomly gathered data tables for argumentation — no elaboration of hypotheses, no systematic marshalling of relevant evidence in terms of such hypotheses, no conclusion. The paper simply drifts off into oblivion, as did — no doubt — those in the audience. Finally, there is a competent, straightforward narrative of the 1974-75 Portuguese revolution by Kenneth Maxwell, focusing on strategic blunders committed by Cunhal and the PCP. What such an essay is doing in a book on Eurocommunism, let alone a collection that is supposed to investigate "ideological and political-theoretical foundations," is a mystery.

By now, however, it should be obvious that there never was a common theme or focus. Greenwood Press would have done better to leave this one in manuscript.

Moishe Gonzales

Michael Löwy. *Georg Lukacs — From Romanticism to Bolshevism.* Trans. Patrick Camiller. London: New Left Books, 1979.

Andrew Arato and Paul Breines. *The Young Lukacs and the Origins of Western Marxism.* New York: Seabury Press, 1979.

The rather belated discovery of Georg Lukacs in the West and, most recently, in this country, has tended to foster the false notion of a deep split between an early (good) humanist and a later (bad) Stalinist Lukacs. It is the early Lukacs, of course (as it was the young Marx in the 1950s and early 1960s, whom Lukacs himself was one of the first to rediscover) that has captured the imagination of Western intellectuals, Marxist and non-Marxist alike: Goldmann, Merleau-Ponty, Lichtheim, Heller, Stedman Jones and Asor-Rosa, to mention but a few — and now Löwy, Arato and Breines. It is certainly true that a sharp difference in tone and purpose distinguishes such early essays as *Soul and Form* (1910) and *The Theory of the Novel* (1914-1915) from such early essays on literary subjects as *Studies in European Realism* (1949) and *The Historical Novel* (1955); or *History and Class Consciousness* (1923) from *The Destruction of Reason* (1954). But to overstate this distinction would be misleading; a considerable degree of continuity clearly exists between the former and the latter. Leading themes and ideas — Lukacs' historicization of aesthetic categories, for example, and his concept of possible consciousness — which are only hinted at or sketchily drawn in the early writings, are systematically developed and defined, or redefined, in the later ones. By the same token, to say, as Löwy does, that Lukacs' writings after 1926 (the date Löwy chooses as the great divide between the early *good*

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and the later *bad* Lukacs) "are rather like the glowing embers of a dying furnace" (p. 205) is similarly unsound in that man of Lukacs' later writings, especially on literary subjects — his inspired essays on Goethe, Schiller, and Thomas Mann, for example — are at least the equal, both intellectually and aesthetically, of anything he wrote on literary culture before 1926. And if *The Young Hegel* (1948) and *The Destruction of Reason* are neither as original, formidable, or historically momentous as *History and Class Consciousness,* they remain major works of intellectual history, albeit undeservedly ignored, which can scarcely be described as Stalinist. The fact is that the weaknesses of Lukacs' later writings were already present from the beginning, and many of the early strengths remained alive throughout his long career.

This preoccupation with the early Lukacs, then, has less to do with an actual split in his development than with an affinity between the young Lukacs and his times and the current state of Western, indeed, international, Marxism. As Arato and Breines put it: "The young Lukacs' heirs in the 1960s reinterpreted his work as a critique of their own experience in capitalist (and socialist) society — as a contribution to their own radicalization. For at its root, the rebellion of students and intellectuals was directed against the reification of everyday life, the process by which human life is transformed under conditions of production into things, marketable goods, numbers. A critique of reification lay at the very heart of the young Lukacs' work, pre-Marxist and post-Marxist. In that work sections of the New Left grasped a vital theoretical anticipation of their own activity"(p. 224).

But the New Left has come and gone; Marxist intellectuals now find themselves in a predicament similar to that in which Lukacs so often found himself: revolutionaries without a revolution, without a program, without a constituency, divided, in disarray, frustrated in their messianic hopes for a dialectical transcendance of bourgeois humanism and the creation of a new socialist order with a human face. It is not surprising, then, that some of the heirs of the young Lukacs, Löwy, Arato and Breines among them, now admire him less for his unique and brilliant (albeit strained) effort to reconcile traditional bourgeois-democratic culture with Marxist theory than as an ideal case study of what is living and what is dead in contemporary Marxism. Lukacs was, after all, as these authors remind us, the greatest Marxist thinker since Marx himself, and, due to the circumstances of his life and times, "a case of *exemplary* significance for a sociological understanding of the problem of revolutionary intellectuals" (Löwy, p. 10). And *History and Class Consciousness* still stands as a "fundamental text of Western Marxism" (Arato, Breines, p. 112), even though Lukacs himself, referring specifically to that text, stated that there are some books which are intensely necessary at a certain pointl in history, but which should strive to resolve the problems they engage and thus carry in them their own oblivion. To write "for eternity" is a romantic posture. Thus, it is ironic that *History and Class Consciousness* — a book Lukacs repudiated, not out of political fear, but because he genuinely believed that it misinterpreted fundamental concepts of dialectical materialism — should endure, even now, as his most famous and significant achievement.

These remarks are not meant to belittle, but rather to clarify the perspective of Löwy's and Arato and Breines' studies, which are, it must be said at the outset, the most definitive accounts of the young Lukacs to date and are likely to remain so for some time to come. From them the young Lukacs emerges in all his fascinating complexity, originality, and the significance for the subsequent history of Marxism and, indeed, for 20th-century Western intellectual history in general. Both works cover much the same ground — Lukacs' early intellectual development in Hungary and

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Germany, his conversion to communism in 1918, the genesis of *History and Class Consciousness*, its importance as the high point of Lukacs' career and the source of "Western" Marxism, and Lukacs' eventual ambiguous settlement with Stalinism — but from somewhat different, although complementary, points of view. Löwy's work, as already noted, is a case study in the sociology of ideas and the problematic of revolutionary intellectuals, whereas Arato and Breines' is more of an intellectual biography in the usual sense, emphasizing origins, development, and influences.

Löwy views Lukacs as a paradigm of the ideological evolution of 20th-century revolutionary intellectuals for several reasons: (1) Lukacs was, after Marx himself, the most *traditional* intellectual (i.e., the only one most deeply immersed in bourgeois culture) to take up the cause of the proletariat; (2) unlike most other revolutionary intellectuals, Lukacs came to Marxism at a comparatively advanced age (he was 33 in 1918), which made his conversion correspondingly more problematical and intellectually pregnant; (3) being rooted in two cultures at once — relatively "backward" Hungary and relatively "advanced" Germany — Lukacs' intellectual perspective was exceptionally broad and cosmopolitan; and (4) Lukacs' development was a microcosm of the course of radical thought from its romantic, anti-capitalist beginnings in the late 19th century to its Stalinist and post-Stalinist phases.

Löwy begins by asking why a large number of intellectuals before the First World War became radically opposed to capitalism and ended up embracing Marxism. As against Lukacs himself, who held that the intelligentsia as a whole is not revolutionary and that intellectuals became revolutionaries only *as individuals*, Löwy argues that, when many thinkers of the same general social type follow the same general course of action at about the same time, this is no coincidence, but rather a significant social phenomenon requiring a sociological explanation. Löwy defines intellectuals by their role as "direct producers of the ideological sphere" (p. 15) and by their special affinity with the petty bourgeoisie, from which most of them are recruited and to which the intellectual professions of writer, teacher, artist, and scientist have traditionally fallen. Thus, Löwy traces the anti-capitalism and radicalization of the intelligentsia of Lukacs' youth to two sources: (1) the reaction of the petty bourgeoisie to the distinguishing effect of capitalism on its socio-economic way of life, and (2) the antipathy between the intellectual's world, which is governed by qualitative values, and the capitalist world, which is governed by quantitative values despite its humanist ideology. Acting in the name of that very humanism which the bourgeoisie betrayed once it came to power, many intellectuals turned to Marxism as the only theory that seemed to offer both an explanation of and a solution to the reification of all human relations and activities under capitalism.

Romantic anti-capitalism was general among intellectuals throughout Europe before the First World War, but it assumed different forms and had different consequences in Germany and Hungary, corresponding to the different configuration of social forces in each country and differences in the composition and situations of their respective intelligentsias. Löwy shows how the young Lukacs incorporated and blended the two, thus giving his romantic anti-capitalism its distinctive cast. Romantic anti-capitalism in Germany was confined largely to academic groups and assumed conservative and reactionary forms. Unlike its French and Italian counterparts, the opposition to capitalism in Germany had no link with workers' movements. Its *leitmotiv* was the opposition often seen (by Tönnies and Simmel, for example) as a tragic and insoluble conflict; and its mood was predominantly one of resignation to the triumph of capitalism and the disintegration of the old, "organic," precapitalist order. Even in Germany, however, romantic anti-capitalism did not lead

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in every case to reaction; the "left-wing" of the brilliant Max Weber circle, nurtured on the messianic-utopian vision of Dostoevsky and other Russian mystics, went over to Marxism after the First World War: Ernst Bloch, Ernst Toller, and, of course, Lukacs himself. These apparently contradictory tendencies found supreme literary expression in the strange and ambiguous figure of Leo Naphta in Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain*, whom Lukacs describes as a fascist but who was based in part on Lukacs himself. Löwy correctly interprets Naphta as a character who represented "*in potentia* both communism *and* reaction, Bolshevism *and* fascism" (p. 63); and Naphta's unexpected suicide is Mann's prophetic resolution of a contradictory phenomenon carried to its logical conclusion.

Hungary, by contrast, was still pre-capitalist and semi-feudal in the early years of this century, and thus resembled Russia more than it did Germany or Western Europe. Consequently, anti-capitalist Hungarian intellectuals were less resigned to the ultimate triumph of capitalism than their German counterparts and more hostile to the feudal world, which was, to them less a nostalgically remembered past then a stifling and oppressive present reality. Opposition to capitalism fused with opposition to feudalism, so that the discontented Hungarian intelligentsia tended to be more radical than the German and more open to ties with workers' movements. Moreover, Hungarian intellectuals did not form part of a privileged university establishment, nor were they linked socially or ideologically to a declining petty bourgeoisie. Many, like Lukacs himself, were Jews and came from the upper bourgeoisie, which sought to fuse with and identify with the gentry. Disgusted with and isolated from the mainstream of Hungarian society, placing their hopes in the small but politically aware and active Hungarian proletariat, and inspired by the messianic poet, Endre Ady, and the anarcho-populist revolutionary, Erwin Szabo, a large number of romantic anti-capitalist intellectuals in Hungary, including Lukacs, went over to communism in the wake of the First World War and helped carry out the social revolution of 1919.

Löwy wants to show that Lukacs began his development from intellectual to revolutionary by embracing the problematic of both the German intelligentsia (acceptance of the stability of an ultra-conservative, feudal-bourgeois order), fusing the two into an "extremely radical 'ideological amalgam' that tended towards a consistently tragic world view" (p. 97), which would dominate most of his early aesthetic writings. *Soul and Form* (1910) and "On the Poverty of Spirit" (1911) are governed by an uncompromising Kantian dualism, according to which the tragic vision, the vision of "real life" — life in search of absolute aesthetic-philisophical values — is seen as antithetical to and unrealizable in the inauthentic, impure, incomplete life of the empirical world. Tragedy, for the young Lukacs, stemmed from this contradiction between the demand for unattainable ideals and an unacceptable world; that is, from nostalgia for an authentic life incapable of realization in the concrete life of society. Lukacs passionately defended his interpretation of tragedy and found inspiration for it in Novalis, Kierkegaard, Theodor Storm, Paul Ernst, and Ady, among others, but above all in Dostoevsky. But, argues Löwy, because he still accepted the stability and immutability of capitalist society and could not yet conceive of a social force capable of changing the world and making it amenable to the realization of absolute values, the young Lukacs, in despair, regarded the conflict between the tragic vision and ordinary life as insoluble. "The conflict therefore assumed the eternal, ahistorical, unchangeable character of *metaphysics* — hence the title of Lukacs' essay 'The Metaphysics of Tragedy' " (p. 109).

The tragic vision still prevails in *The Theory of the Novel*, but this work marks

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Lukacs' first attempt to find a way out of the impasse between the urge for totality and man's alienation in the modern world. In the 1962 preface to this work, Lukacs speaks of his transition, catalyzed by the First World War, from a Kantian to a Hegelian perspective; that is, his rejection of the (Kantian) "methodological chasm between timeless value and historical realization of value" and his new (Hegelian) quest to discover "an intimate connection between category and history" (p. 16). Lukacs was now able to perceive the tragic vision less as a metaphysical than a historical problem and hence capable of resolution.

The Theory of the Novel begins with a discussion of the epic as the supreme artistic expression of the organic totality of the Hellenic experience of the world. The desire for totality outlasted the Greek world and continued as an inherent need of the human mind. It persists in modern, alienated man, but instead of fulfilling itself, this desire becomes, in the novel, the statement of an intention to recover the unity it no longer possesses. Lukacs describes the novel as "the epic of a world that has been abandoned by God" (p. 88). The theme of the novel is the individual's frustrating experience of his own inability to acquire universal dimensions. "The novel hero's psychology is demonic; the objectivity of the novel is the mature man's knowledge that meaning can never quite penetrate reality, but that, without meaning, reality would disintegrate into the nothingness of inessentiality" (p. 88). This thematic duality, this tension between an earth-bound destiny and a consciousness that tries to transcend this condition, Lukacs calls ironic. Irony is the means by which the novelist seeks to transcend the avowed contingency of his condition. "Irony, the self-surmounting of a subjectivity that has gone as far as it is possible to go, is the highest freedom that can be achieved in the world without God. That is why it is not only the sole possible *a priori* condition for a true, totality-creating objectivity but also why it makes that totality — the novel — the representative art-form of our age: because the structural categories of the novel constitutively coincide with the world as it is today" (p. 93).

Löwy sees in the last chapter of *The Theory of the Novel* — on Tolstoy and Dostoevsky — "a strange and complex glimmer of hope" (p. 110) for a breakthrough into a new epoch in which something of the organic unity of life and art in the age of the epic will be restored. He shows that *The Theory of the Novel* was in fact conceived as the introduction to a major work on Dostoevsky, and that it should be seen not merely as a brilliant analysis of the novel as the representative art form of the modern world, but, more importantly, as a stage in Lukacs' evolution from a metaphysics of tragedy toward a historico-social utopia the dawn of which he was ready to read into the Russian Revolution two years later. The last step in Lukacs' passage to communism was his rejection of "the abstract, frozen, neo-Kantian dualism of 'good' and 'evil' " (p. 134), and his acceptance (inspired by Goethe, Hegel, and, of course, Marx himself) of the Faustian dialectic of good and evil: the idea of a pact with the devil as the only way that can lead to the good. "Lukacs could not become a Bolshevik until he had understood that the revolution is under a tragic compulsion to kill on the field of battle in order to achieve the final emancipation of the proletariat. Only through this crucial mediation was he able to move from the position of a tragic spectator to that of a committed actor, from abstract, metaphysical moralism to a more realistic political ethic" (p. 137).

Löwy, following Lucien Goldmann, sums up Lukacs' complex conversion as a passage not only from "Dostoevskian Tolstoyism to Bolshevism, but also from Kantianism to Marxism, from tragic thought to dialectic thought: *from one world view to another*" (p. 138). But isn't this discontinuity exaggerated? The fact is that

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the roots of Lukacs' later commitment to realism are certainly to be found in *The Theory of the Novel*, a realism all the more convincing as it is balanced by the novelist's attempt to transcend the limitations of reality. And would it be rash to suggest that Lukacs' "pact with the devil," that his very choice of this particular metaphor to express his solution to the ethical antinomy of ends and means, was itself an ironic gesture? Löwy goes on to say, correctly, that Lukacs' eschatology and chiliasm "become more understandable if we consider that world revolution was very widely expected during this period (1918-19), and that such expectations corresponded, in a far from arbitrary way, to an *objective possibility* of the time" (p. 143). But, surely, we must question the following statement: "Nor can it be denied that, if the revolution had spread to Europe and the rest of the world in 1919, the resulting proletarian regime would have been much closer to the historical ideal of socialism than the pale bureaucratic caricature that was progressively established on the ebbing revolutionary tide." On what does Löwy base this opinion? And what makes him so certain that a worldwide proletarian regime would not also have degenerated into a bureaucratic caricature of the "historical" ideal of socialism — or worse? It seems that, here and elsewhere, Löwy himself falls into the young Lukacs' own confusion of objective possibility with historical reality.

These unanswered questions in turn lead to further ambiguities in Löwy's account of Lukacs' development from 1919 to 1929. For example, he would have us believe that Lukacs' tragic sense of the impossibility of attaining absolute values in the real world disappeared after his conversion to Marxism and his decision to become politically active. On the same page, however, he tells us that Lukacs' early political positions "still bore the imprint of his pre-Marxist *Weltanschauung*" (p. 147). But how can both statements be true at the same time? Does Löwy mean to say only that the revolutionary dialectical component gained the upper hand over the tragic in Lukacs' ideological universe after 1918? If so, then how can he speak, in any absolute sense, of Lukacs' transition *from one world view to another*? Or, again, Löwy praises Lukacs' "remarkable combination of classicism and revolutionary boldness" (p. 150) in his role as Deputy People's Commissar for Education and Culture during the Béla Kun regime. This statement is true, of course, and would remain the hallmark of Lukacs' aesthetic views thereafter. But does Lukacs' encouragement of performances for the masses of plays by Lessing, Gogol, Calderon, Molière, Ibsen, Hauptmann, Shaw, etc., suggest that he broke, or even wished to break, completely with the realist bourgeois cultural traditions of the past? Löwy has a keen sense of the tensions in Lukacs' development and, on the whole, applies his sociological and Marxist categories very effectively. What he seems to overlook, however, is that, while ideas and world views may develop dialectically, real people do not; rather, they function on several different levels at once, none of which ever completely dominates or disappears.

Similar problems arise with regard to Löwy's perceptive but polemical analysis of *History and Class Consciousness*. After reminding us that *History and Class Consciousness* is above all "a *political* work, the central problem of which is *the proletarian revolution against capitalist reification*," he adds that "it is precisely this aspect that accounts for the interest and *topicality* of the book" (p. 171). In what sense topical? Is a proletarian revolution against capitalist reification imminent anywhere in the world today? Is it possible to believe today, as Lukacs did when writing this book, that the proletariat is destined to redeem mankind? And did not the New Left differ from the Old precisely in its more limited faith in, and solidarity with, the working class? Arato and Breines argue — more sensibly, and more in keeping with Lukacs'

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own critique of this work — that "the whole problem of class analysis is indeed solved in a dogmatic and mythological fashion by Lukacs...; that already by 1923 the industrial proletariat in the West seemed to have a tendency to become less rather than more revolutionary; and that Lukacs' own theory of reification seemed to exclude the possibility of proletarian freedom" (pp. 140-141).

Or, again Löwy insists, against Lukacs himself, that *History and Class Consciousness* did not simply represent a continuation and refinement of his previous development, but instead opened "a *new* theoretical universe, one that abolishes-transcends the utopian tendencies of 1919-20" (p. 173). *History and Class Consciousness* does, of course, mark the high point of the young Lukacs' theoretical development, and Löwy is quite right to insist that it achieves "a remarkable dialectical synthesis (*Aufhebung*) of Ought and Is, values and reality, ethics and politics, underlying tendencies and empirical facts, final goals and immediate circumstances, will and material conditions, future and present, subject and object" (p. 171). But in his zeal to defend *History and Class Consciousness* not only as a brilliant synthesis, but as a set of truths inscribed in stone, Löwy simply refuses to acknowledge that the "new conception of *revolutionary realism*" (p. 171) Lukacs achieves in this work contains a large dose of his earlier, pre-Marxist messianic utopianism, which, as he himself admits in the 1967 preface to *History and Class Consciousness,* is partly responsible for its flaws. Again, Arato and Breines are more on target in saying: "Class consciousness, revolutionary organization, and the reified world — these were the terms of Lukacs' dilemma, and that of the postwar revolutionary movement. He would spend the year 1922 revising and deepening his analysis of the terms. The result was a text whose remarkable originality nearly compensated for its tragic flaws" (p. 108).

Löwy ends his analysis of *History and Class Consciousness* defending it as Leninist and refuting charges that it is proto-Stalinist. But here, again, Löwy goes too far; on the one hand, by overstating the Leninist aspects of the work and, on the other, the differences between Lenin's Bolshevism and Stalin's prior to Lenin's death in 1924. While it is true that Lenin's revolutionary internationalist position is basic to *History and Class Consciousness,* it is also true, as Arato and Breines show, that Lukacs steered a complicated course between Lenin and Luxemburg: a course "not to be seen merely in the context of his juggling with freedom and necessity, party and class, but even more in terms of his attempt to specify the subject of the primacy of politics in the age of revolution.In his view, Luxemburg's stress on organic economic development, spontaneity, and proletarian self-determination, subsumed the proletarian revolution under the supposed model of the classical bourgeois revolution, thus losing the primacy of politics. He could, nevertheless, not bring himself (anymore than could Luxemburg) to acknowledge the Leninist model of the militarized factory as the paradigm of the socialist revolution" (p. 154). Arato and Breines also show that Lukacs' "new mythology" of the party as "the unitary expression of the 'will' of the proletariat...never managed to please his Leninist opponents, whom the party myth nevertheless legitimated" (p. 151).

As to the second point, Lukacs later acknowledged that his agreement with Stalin in 1924 about the necessity of socialism in one country marked a new stage in his thought. But he also points out that the survival of socialism in one country was a possibility that Lenin himself had affirmed long before (1967 preface to *HCC,* pp. xxvii-xxviii). On this issue at least, Lukacs, like many other Bolsheviks *at the time,* saw little difference between Lenin and Stalin. He could agree with Stalin because he

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accepted the position of the Third International in 1924 that the opportunity for world revolution had passed and that the capitalist world had returned to relative stability. Accepting this position, however, meant accepting also the denunciation of *History and Class Consciousness* for its messianic utopianism.

Nevertheless, this strategy of playing off a revolutionary Lenin against a reactionary Stalin enables Löwy to achieve his purpose of playing up the early Lukacs and playing down the later. Löwy does concede that, even after Lukacs rallied to Stalin in 1926, he never merely toed the party line. "*He had his own line*, which sometimes coincided with and sometimes clashed with the 'Centre.' While he accepted the fundamental premises of Stalinist politics (socialism in one country, the abandonment of revolutionary internationalism), Lukacs was not a blind follower" (p. 202). But, on the whole, Löwy (and Arato and Breines, for that matter) views Lukacs' career after 1926, except for the last few years of his life, as a record of compromise, reconciliation, and retreat. He speaks of Lukacs' abandonment of his early attempts at a dialectical transcendence of bourgeois humanism and his "falling back on a less ambitious and more 'realistic' project: the reconciliation of bourgeois-democratic culture and the Communist movement" (p. 205) — as if the two were poles apart and the former did not prefigure the latter. Only if one cannot see that there is more to texts than their immediately political aspects is such a conclusion justified.

Although Arato and Breines are in fundamental agreement with Löwy about the main lines of the young Lukacs' development, on some important points, both interpretive and methodological, they disagree. For one thing, Arato and Breines see Lukacs' constant preoccupation with the crisis of modern bourgeois culture and of subjectivity within it as a unifying theme of his pre-Marxist period, which was instrumental in his conversion to Marxism and gave it its distinctively "Western" character. That is, unlike Löwy, they do not view this preoccupation merely as an ephemeral manifestation of romantic anti-capitalism, which Lukacs eventually outgrew, or as a component of the tragic world view, which he eventually transcended. They see it rather as a problem central to his whole early (and, I would add, later) development, a legacy of his deeply ingrained bourgeois philosophical past, which, they recognize, accounts for at least some of his later difficulties with the Russian Bolsheviks, Leninists and Stalinists alike. This is not to say that Arato and Breines underestimate the young Lukacs' disenchantment with bourgeois culture or his receptivity to those like Fichte, Dostoevsky and, of course, Marx himself, who converted him to revolutionary politics. It is to say, however, that they strike a better balance between the continuities and discontinuities in his early development, continuities they do not try to explain away in terms of transitions from one world view to another.

Arato and Breines also differ from Löwy on some points in their assessment of *History and Class Consciousness*. As already noted, Löwy praises it as Leninist, whereas Arato and Breines see its Leninism more as a capitulation, which they explain not only by the structure of power in the parties of the Third International, but also, and more importantly, by defects in Lukacs' own philosophical concepts: his theory of reification, revolution, class and party. In their excellent analysis of this work, they show that, in spite of Lukacs' genuine desire to criticize the forms of bureaucratism in the Communist movement, "his mythology of revolutionary subjectivity, his concept of of 'real' class consciousness, and his dogged adherence to the Russian Idea as supposedly realized in the October Revolution, all prejudiced him to support the ultimate bases of the bureaucracy, the Leninist party. The ultimate principle having

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his implicit support, Lukacs was powerless against the Bolshevized Comintern and its Hungarian agents" (p. 107).

The final chapters of *The Young Lukacs and the Origins of Western Marxism* deal with the debate over *History and Class Consciousness* during the 1920s and 1930s and beyond and its influence on Marxists of all types, phenomenology, existentialism, the Frankfurt School, and critical theory. These chapters are instructive because (1) they situate the debate in its historical context and allow us to see what distinguished commentators, widely different in their philosophical and political interests and in their responses to rapidly changing events, found inspiring or repellent in a text that Arato and Breines describe as "a sort of philosophical and sociological last rite spoken over the fading soul of the postwar revolutionary movement, and a reveille to its reawakening" (p. 169); (2) they allow us to see, through the debate itself, what made this tension-ridden text so charismatic to so many for so long, admirers and detractors alike; and (3) they present the young Lukacs as a remarkable but contradictory thinker who was at once the most forceful advocate of Marxist humanism in this century and the very personification of the permanent crisis of Marxism. We may reject or question certain aspects of the assessments of Löwy, Arato, and Breines about the legacy of the young Lukacs and the Marxist tradition in general. But their profound and challenging studies are certain to enrich our understanding of these issues.

Robert Anchor

Sara Evans. *Personal Politics: The Roots of Women's Liberation in the Civil Rights Movement and the New Left*. New York: Vintage, 1979. 274 pages.

Sheila Rowbotham, Lynne Segal and Hilary Wainwright. *Beyond the Fragments: Feminism and the Making of Socialism*. London: Merlin Press, 1979. 253 pages.

We have entered an era in which a lot of political capital can be made from "defense" of the family and women's traditional place, mired exclusively in private life. In the face of a backlash which has been doing its best to engulf the second wave of feminism and take back whatever meager gains women have made since the sixties,[1] discussions of women's active role in politics assume a great deal of significance. Here we have two books which explore some of the interconnections between the feminist movement and the left. Both volumes raise important questions concerning the historical and theoretical relation of feminism to social change.

In *Personal Politics*, Evans very readably tells the story of an important segment of contemporary feminists who were nurtured in other social movements, as were the nineteenth century suffragettes. Evans' book provides a necessary corrective to previous volumes on the student or the civil rights movements which minimize the extent of women's participation, as well as to other analyses of the women's movement which are less sensitive to the ambiguities of women's experience in the New Left. She also lays to rest, once and for all, the distorted notion that modern feminism is strictly an affair of urban, middle class, white women.

1. Linda Gordon and Allen Hunter discuss right-wing response to the women's movement in an article entitled "Sex, Family and the New Right: Anti-Feminism as a Political Force," *Radical America*, nos. 11, 12 (Winter, 1977-78), pp. 9-25.

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Evans, who is from North Carolina, does not focus exclusively on events in or individuals from New York and California. She begins by documenting the activities of large numbers of relatively unknown women from the South who became involved in civil rights in its early days through their Protestant church groups.[2] Baptist and Methodist student groups of the fifties met in an atmosphere of moral idealism which could not tolerate complacent acceptance of segregation. Like nineteenth century abolitionists, they invoked God's authority to justify political activism. Their evangalical traditions gave them a vision of the future and an ideal for the movement itself epitomized by the phrase "redemptive community," found in S.N.C.C.'s first statement of purpose (37).

Repetition of Stokeley Carmichael's horrendously memorable remark — "The only position for women in S.N.C.C. is prone" — in every account of the growth of the women's movement has obscured the degree to which women were active and respected members of the organization in the early sixties. Women joined S.N.C.C., as well as other civil rights groups, as autonomous political individuals, not as appendages to men. Intense work in an atmosphere of constant danger did not permit men to view women militants as delicate, weak, or strictly domestic. In addition, S.N.C.C. evolved an egalitarian style of organizing which minimized the role of leaders and stressed consensus.

S.N.C.C.'s philosophy, which also influenced other organizations, found embodiment in the phrase, "Let the people decide." "The people" included large numbers of strong. out-spoken black women who never hesitated to assert themselves in or even lead the struggles in their communities. Northern or southern white women, seeking to distance themselves from their ingrained "ladylike" manners, saw in such women alternative patterns of "womanly" behaviour.

Nonetheless, traditional expectations about women's place haunted men and women alike and generated conflicts, especially as the movement increased in size. In 1964, black women held a "half-serious, half-joking sit-in" in the Atlanta office of S.N.C.C. to call attention to their relegation to typing duties while men were claiming the more public responsibilities. In freedom houses all over the South, women complained that they were expected to do all the cooking and cleaning. Evans stresses the point that black women were the first to protest these kinds of inequities. This widespread grass-roots protest was first systematically articulated, however, by two white women in S.N.C.C., Casey Hayden and Mary King, who presented the paper which elicited Carmichael's infamous commentary at a S.N.C.C. retreat.

Hayden and King did not sign their report, perhaps to generalize its arguments beyond their own situation, but certainly because they wished to avoid the ridicule and hostility they knew would result from its discussion. They made the obvious and now familiar analogy between racism and sexism, an argument which should have impressed such an audience, when they pointed to the "assumption of male superiority. . . as widespread and deep-rooted and. . . as crippling to the woman as the assumptions of white supremacy are to the Negro." (86). Just as the Grimké sisters, or Elizabeth Cady Stanton, working in the nineteenth century Abolitionist movement recognized many of the anomalies of their own legal position in the status of the slaves, women in the civil rights movement became conscious of the similarities between the oppression of blacks and that of women. They saw that many of the demands made by

2. Evans notes: "Most white women who participated in the early years of the civil rights movement tended to be southerners, and virtually without exception white southern women who joined the civil rights movement came to it first from the Church" (p. 35).

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blacks for equality of opportunity and for equal access to social benefits could, using the same logic, be made by women too.

Their activity in civil rights had given women a tendency to question received ideas and values, a belief in the possibility of change, and a confidence in their own capabilities which no longer permitted them to overlook the casual, everyday subordination and humiliations accepted as normal by both sexes. A similar dynamic can be observed in the student movement.

Evans notes that the New Left tended to be even more male dominated than civil rights groups, and less conscious of sexism as an issue than the Old Left, which had at least paid lip service to the "woman question." However, emphasis on community organizing in the early sixties allowed women a scope for activity which focus on either the campus or the draft did not. Women often had more real success in the ghettos than men, because the housing and welfare issues which could bring people out to a meeting were perceived as women's concerns. Nonetheless, their relative success did not necessarily mean that their activities were seen as important or truly "revolutionary." Male organizers tended to mythologize the radical potential of macho street gangs and even to emulate their style of life. With a shift from community organizing to draft resistance, idealization of exclusively male heroism intensified so that women were more and more excluded from "real" political activity.

When white radicals were excluded from what became the black power movement, they were forced to turn their attention to oppression in their own lives. Draft resistance forced women, indirectly, to do the same thing. When men in S.D.S. refused to take the questions women raised seriously, women had little choice but to withdraw and form their own groups.

Many of the strategies for organizing, which have come to be associated particularly with feminism, came from early S.N.C.C. or S.D.S. experience. Formation of consciousness-raising groups and rejection of organizational hierarchies, for example, had their analogues in early sixties civil rights and community organizing. For many women there was a direct transfer of ideas and techniques which, for women first attracted to radical politics by the new feminist rhetoric, seemed to promise in themselves liberation from isolation and frustration.[3]

Evans makes the history she is writing very concrete by including numerous short biographical accounts of individual members of the organizations she has researched, even when these women did not become celebrities of the movement. However, she neither provides an analysis of the theories of incipient feminist groups nor does she discuss critically the implications of her title.[4] One might also wish that she had described or documented further the cross fertilization process which occurred between feminists emerging from the left and feminists working "within the system" in organizations like N.O.W.[5]

3. Rowbotham also notes the danger that an exclusive emphasis on consciousness-raising groups "can put too much pressure on women to change by an effort of will alone" (p. 41).

4. Rowbotham notes a paradox in the slogan that the personal is political: "A politics which asserted subjectivity could ironically become a means of reducing human beings to the functions they perform for capital. Notions of individual potential could thus be obscured and denied" (p. 31).

5. Jo Freeman in her book *The Politics of Women's Liberation: A Case Study of an Emerging Social Movement and Its Relation to the Policy Process* (New York: Longman, Inc., 1975) does discuss this process. She notes the dangers of seeing the women's movement in terms of preconceived political categories: "It is a common mistake to try to place the various feminist organizations on the traditional left-right spectrum and, concomitantly, to describe the two branches as 'women's rights' and 'women's liberation.' The terms 'reformist' and 'radical' by which

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It has proved difficult to "contain" the feminist critique within a hypothetical "bourgeois" perspective which will accept our oppressive social system and demand only that women be accorded an equal chance to "make it" within that structure. There is an inherent logic to feminism which may begin by merely questioning the "place" of women and men in society, but will end by rejecting the very bases of the social system. However, the policy decisions and legislation which extend the logic of early civil rights demands to women tend to undercut the radical potential of feminism and encourage women to think of themselves as another minority group contending with blacks, Spanish Americans, and increasingly disgruntled white males for a share of narrowly-defined and (seemingly) ever-shrinking resources. (Women, seen in this light by minority groups themselves, were certainly not a welcome addition to the anti-discrimination legislation of the sixties and early seventies.) Obviously this approach can provide feminists with a comforting sense that their struggles have achieved tangible results in areas like hiring and wage discrimination, but exclusive focus on the part of some women's groups on such issues can also preclude thinking about more problematic features of women's situation which are not affected at all by liberal "equal rights" legislation or executive orders requiring affirmative action.

Although Evans does not analyze the various theoretical currents within feminism, she does show the logic of fragmentation which gave rise to the women's movement and later also bedevilled it, began with the acceptance of the idea that each interest group must organize around its own oppression. Now many feminists, nostalgic for the good old days of socialist unity, are encouraging us to move "beyond the fragments" to consider strategies for organizing women and men into one "socialist" movement.

Rowbotham's essay, which is the longest and most provocative of the three in *Beyond the Fragments*, provides an interesting complement to Evans' book, although they were written with different aims, and, of course, emerge from British and American experience respectively.[6] Both Evans and Rowbotham describe at the outset their own specific political backgrounds rather than adopt the "objective" stance which implies that their ideas have arisen out of some transcendent realm of pure thought.

Rowbotham's dialogue is fundamentally with Leninist groups and her critique is focused on their organizing model. She would like to see all socialist movements and parties not only learn new strategies and techniques of organizing from feminists, but also formulate new assumptions about the relationships between insiders and outsiders, the "cadre" and "the people." For her, "The women's movement suggests certain ways of reopening the possibility of a strong and popular socialist movement, (49) which could recover elements of an earlier "libertarian socialist tradition" (47), subsequently slandered as "utopian."[7] This tradition emphasized the development of

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the two branches are so often designated are convenient and fit into our preconceived notions about the nature of political activity, but they tell us little of relevance" (p. 50).

6. Nancy Hartsock makes an argument similar to that of Rowbotham with specific reference to the American political scene in her article "Feminist Theory and the Development of Revolutionary Strategy" in *Capitalist Patriarchy and the Case for Socialist Feminism*, ed. Zillah R. Eisenstein (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1979), pp. 56-77.

7. In recent years Rowbotham has been concerned with recovering the libertarian socialist tradition. Along with Jeffrey Weeks she published *Socialism and the New Life: The Personal and Sexual Politics of Edward Carpenter and Havelock Ellis* (London: Pluto Press, 1977). She also has been exploring historical connecitons between socialism and feminism, as in her book *A New World for Women: Stella Browne — Socialist — Feminist* (London: Pluto Press, 1977) or her earlier work, *Women, Resistance and Revolution* (New York: Pantheon, 1972).

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a whole alternative culture which would permit socialists to experience something in the present of what they anticipated in the future, at least in the quality of their personal relationships.

In order to pave the way for a rapprochement of socialism and feminism, Rowbotham wants to initiate an honest, critical look at the past. She begins this by surveying the left's infamous record of misunderstanding and misrepresentation of women's concerns. When socialists of either the nineteenth or twentieth century have not completely denied or resisted women's claims by insisting that they are trivial, insignificant, or that they "divide the working class," they have myopically narrowed the feminist critique to a shopping list of "demands" which could either be "struggled for" before the revolution or conceded after it. (Interestingly enough, this is the same approach that liberal establishment thinking takes in relation to women, so we get advocacy of a series of "reforms," which obfuscates, as I argue above, the real subversion feminism can represent.) And, of course, the ultimate irony is that both nineteenth and twentieth century leftists have been guilty of attacking a caricatured "bourgeois feminism," a kind of straw woman they have in large part created.

Rowbotham's review of this sad story is both acute and insightful, but it raises many questions which go beyond the scope of her essay. For one thing, she never discusses what she has in mind when she uses the word "socialism," aside from a brief reference to "the creation of a society in which there are no forms of domination" (50). Thus, at the end of the essay, readers are painfully aware that they are being invited to forge a movement, but for what purpose remains unclear. The counter-argument is, of course, that no one can be expected to lay out a blueprint for the future. However, certainly it is necessary, if one is thinking in terms of broad social movements, to examine assumptions and make sure there exists a real shared vision. This is exactly what is lacking in such an uncritical use of the word "socialism," even in the very midst of a critique of past and contemporary practice of socialist groups. What is perhaps more frustrating is that Rowbotham, while acknowledging, even emphasizing, the importance of theory to feminist activists, really limits her critical discussion to questions of organizational strategy. It would be more than interesting to know, for example, what she would say of the work done by many British socialist-feminists which has been heavily influenced by Althusser, Lacan, and Levi-Strauss.[8] It is disappointing that she does not mention these trends which seem to come into sharp conflict with her libertarian perspective.

Lynne Segal in her essay "A Local Experience" writes as an Islington community organizer who moved from creating a women's center to participating in a "socialist center," and now believes that local groups must begin to form a larger movement. Her piece is less a detailed account of either her own experience or that of the groups in which she has been active, than a reflection on the strengths and weaknesses of both the "established" national left organizations (like the C.P. or S.W.P.) and the more diffuse feminist and libertarian groups. Mutual suspicion, it seems, has made it next to impossible for individuals from these diverse camps to work together, even on specific, limited issues. Nonetheless, Segal would like to see the formation of a movement which could both overcome the isolation of small, local centers (without becoming overly centralized and authoritarian) and avoid the limitations of Marxist groups which focus solely on workers' point-of-production conflicts.

8. See, for example, some of the essays in *Feminism and Materialism: Women and Modes of Production*, ed. Annette Kuhn and Ann Marie Wolpe (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978).

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One inevitable problem for leftists in Britain is, of course, the existence of the Labour Party. Labour governments have led to the identification in most people's minds of socialism with Labour's brand of state, bureaucratic control. In addition, the left wing of the party siphons off much of the radical energy from local centers. Hilary Wainwright in her essay "Moving beyond the Fragments," notes that those socialists dissatisfied with the Labour Party often assume that their only alternative is to form some other *party*. She, however, advocates, like Segal, a looser and less constricted form of unity among diverse local or interest groups which could lead to the formation of national networks and to debate on substantive issues in a non-sectarian spirit.

But the unexamined assumption remains here, as in Rowbotham's essay: "Women have a strong vested interest in the success of the socialist movement" (249). Dare we ask: do they? This cannot be treated as a purely organizational or strategic question.

Perhaps the fundamental problem plaguing many contemporary socialist-feminists is the tendency to see all issues raised by women in recent feminist debate in terms of self-limiting categories derived from Marxism. Thus questions related to the bearing and raising of children, or by extension even to sexuality in general, become problems of "reproduction." The word itself gives one pause, especially when encountered in rhetorical parallel with "production." What meanings and assumptions are concealed in this form of reference, ubiquitous in socialist-feminist discourse? What images from the world of machines (assembly lines, photocopiers) or perhaps the world of animals does the word conjure up? Uncritical repetition of the term "reproduction" to cover so many of women's (and men's) complex activities robs them of their human dimension by abstracting them to such a degree that the reader can scarcely remember in real-life terms what is under discussion.

In addition, socialist-feminists are prone (as are many radical feminists, too) to accept the logic of industrial society which makes it a burden and a handicap to have children at all. Such logic decrees that women must be "freed" of the nasty business of child-care as soon as possible so that they can be more productive and efficient workers.[9] Women's very ability to bear children in industrial society, which is scarcely organized for their convenience, *is* a burden. Unfortunately, at the conceptual level in socialist-feminist discourse, it remains a burden rather than a source of possibility. The constraints of the present social order are accepted rather than challenged; women's "biology" clearly must be at fault.

Connected with "reproduction" (specifically of labor power) is the ongoing debate over housework. Not who is supposed to do it (solved in theory, if not in practice, in all properly organized left-wing households), but how, in political-economic terms, it should be regarded. Selma James and Mariarosa Dellacosta were perhaps the first to formulate a consistent position arguing that women's work in the home ought to be seen as productive in the Marxist sense since it produces labor power, a commodity which is sold on the market. They made the argument at a moment when few leftist "theoreticians" took women's activities in the home seriously at all. The correct classical Marxist position (going back to Engels) had been that women must leave the home in order to engage in productive work. For women, the orthodox word on housework had always been that it was "backward," a vestige of pre-capitalist days, and that the sooner it was socialized, the better.[10]

9. Hilda Scott discusses the "reforms" undertaken in Eastern Eruope to allow women to participate more easily in the work force when workers were needed during the post-war decades in her book, *Does Socialism Liberate Women? Experiences from Eastern Europe* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1974).

10. Of course it was not only Marxists who wanted to apply what they saw as the logic of

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Undoubtedly Dellacosta and James understood what they were doing when they applied the sacred, incantatory term "productive" to something as messy as housework, if what they wanted was leftists' attention directed to the subject. The publication of their work unleashed a debate which, for its scholasticism, invites comparison with arguments over points in canon law.[11]

Whether or not they call it productive in the Marxist sense, socialist-feminists insist that women's activities in the home be views as *work* analogous to wage labor.[12] This argument goes beyond the simple rejection of the stereotype of the woman at home who does nothing all day but watch soap operas and eat chocolates. It implies that we must look at women's activities in the home, housework, child-care, etc., through the spectacles which were fashioned in order to see and comprehend labor perfomed in the factory or office. Such lenses do not necessarily provide a clearer vision; instead they often blur what's in front of us.

If ultimately we want to develop more emancipated notions of work itself, rather than accept those already offered to us in capitalist society, imposing this particular distortion on women's household activities will obscure important aspects rather than provide insight. I certainly am not arguing that housework is something wonderful and utopian. However, labelling it "domestic labor" and viewing it *solely* in terms of, as well in relation to, wage labor can perhaps lose us more than it gains, not only in understanding women's present but in envisioning future possibilities.[13]

For one thing, calling all of women's activities work in this sense leads to a disproportionate emphasis on the division of labor as a determining factor in male-female relations. Thus, Heidi Hartmann in an influential article entitle, "Capitalism, Patriarchy, and Job Segregation" can argue: "A materialist interpretation of reality, of course, suggests that gender production grows out of the extant division of labor between the sexes, and, in a dialectical process, reinforces the very division of labor itself."[14] The "radical" conclusion she draws in her article is that we must do away with the division of labor in order to eliminate sexual domination and subordination (I'll ignore the dreadful phrase "gender production"). Not only might we wonder whether doing away with the division of labor would do away with such complex phenomena as masculinity and feminity,[15] but also we must question whether the fundamental problem here is the division of labor or the very nature of work itself. Discussion of the division of labor within recent socialist-feminist discourse seems to lose sight of this very basic concern.

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industrialization to the home. Anti-Marxist turn of the century feminists like Charlotte Perkins Gilman also argued that private housework was inefficient as well as constraining for women and ought to be eliminated.

11. Paul Smith reviews this debate in his article "Domestic Labour and Marx's Theory of Value" in *Feminism and Materialism: Women and Modes of Production*, ed. Annette Kuhn and AnnMarie Wolpe (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978), pp. 198-219.

12. Zillah Eisenstein, among others, makes this argument in *Capitalist Patriarchy and the Case for Socialsit Feminism*, p. 169-70.

13. Critics ot the Dellacosta-James view lose sight of their orientation toward developing new definitions of work, and subsequent analyses have retreated from the more interesting and provocative aspects of their position.

14. Hartmann's article originally appeared in *Signs* 1, n. 3, part 2 (Spring, 1976) and has been reprinted in *Capitalist Patriarchy and the Case for Socialist Feminism*. The quotation was taken from the latter (p. 231-2). Kuhn and Wolpe make an argument similar to Hartmann's in their article "Feminism and Materialism" which appears in their anthology, cited above.

15. This, of course, takes for granted that getting rid of gender differences is desirable in the first place. This is not an assumption with which even all feminists would agree.

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Another topic debated by socialist-feminists with regard to women working either inside or outside the home is the vexed question of class. For housewives: do we stick on them the class label "earned" by their husbands? For women working in the expanding clerical and service sectors: do we call them proletarian, *petit bourgeois*, or do we need a whole new category? Jackie West in an article entitled "Women, Sex and Class"[16] explains why this stale sociological issue deserves attention. On the basis of class distinctions, socialists form political alliances. If you place clerks and secretaries in the *petite bourgeoisie*, you imply that "Alliances with them are potentially problematic and such groups may be unreliable class allies."[17] In Cambodia this sort of logic led to the wholesale extermination of "unreliable" and "problematic" elements. Perhaps, some consideration of the terroristic ends to which pinning class labels on groups and individuals can lead might make us reexamine some of the assumptions underlying this otherwise dessicated issue.

Feminism has been involved in a continuing dialogue with other theories of social change which has produced a vast number of articles, pamphlets, and books during the last few years. One reason for this is that women are constantly obliged to remind the grand strategists of human liberation that we exist. Alternatively, women want to develop their own grand strategies, not remain merely a ladies' auxiliary to male theorists. Many women, however, show a modest reluctance to speak on behalf of "mankind."[18] There is a widespread belief among women (amounting to a conviction among men) that feminism addresses *only* women's (by definition, limited and narrow) concerns and must be fused with an all-embracing social theory like Marxism before it can have any universal validity. As Juliet Mitchell put it: "We should ask the feminist question, but try to come up with some Marxist answers."[19]

However, looking at some of the history of nineteenth and twentieth century left-wing movements documented in Rowbotham's and Evans' work, at the "reforms" adopted in "socialist" countries, or at the analyses of present-day socialist-feminists does not encourage the view that feminism needs a good dose of Marxism to make it universal. The resurgence of feminism has enabled women (and men) to pose wide-ranging questions concerning our most basic conceptions of what constitutes history and culture, as well as to examine all aspects of everyday life. To insist upon imposing a Marxist or socialist framework on the subsequent discussion is no more emancipatory than to impose a bourgeois-liberal perspective which demands only that women be permitted to wear grey flannel suits and girls be allowed to compete in the Little League. After all, why should women be the ones trying to repair the holes in the Marxist strait jacket? Just because sewing has traditionally been "women's work"?

Eileen Manion

16. Jackie West, "Women, Sex and Class" in *Feminism and Materialism*, pp. 220-253.
17. West, p. 236.
18. Even Rowbotham sees feminism as expressing only "the experience of one sex" (p. 45).
19. Juliet Mitchell, *Woman's Estate* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1971), p. 99.

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John Sturrock, editor. *Structuralism and Since: From Lévi-Strauss to Derrida.* London: Oxford University Press, 1979. 190 pages. $15.95.

The New Yorker recently published a debunking piece on the Parisian cultural scene. The reporter characterized contemporary French thinkers as exhibitionistic, faddish and humorless. Just as ideas have lost all integrity in Paris, so, too, has the Parisian intellectual evolved into a superficial virtuoso. Thinkers construct theories about "reality" while keeping an eye on marketplace fluctuations. The popularizers in the media and the press package and diffuse the product. The French intellectual cultivates his image as glamorous, learned, theoretically dazzling, quotable, one with an instant opinion on any subject. The more outrageous the posturings, the more the public adores him. His sex appeal and his performing abilities make him equivalent in America to popular culture heroes such as the entertainer, the rock star, and the quarterback.

Thinking in France is eroticized. Recently, thinking "otherwise" has given rise to perverse, self-reflexive and promiscuous verbal performances. Such modes of cultural research and production are more than sublimated forms of sexual curiosity; the sexualization of the mind updates, makes modernistic, a French romantic tradition of celebrating genius, non-conformity, and the brilliant display of one's semantic abilities. *The New Yorker* reporter portrayed French thinkers as rhetorically excessive, self-serving, self-aggrandizing, overly pious, and given to the indiscriminate trafficking in ideas. And traffic they do: French social thought reproduces itself rapidly and opaquely. New techniques of analysis beget not only abstract vocabularies in the human sciences, but also "innovative" scientific disciplines such as grammatology, psycho-linguistics, the archaeology of knowledge, semiology and structural anthropology. The literati and the master thinkers — even if the former reject systems, even if the latter construct an anti-system — constitute a privileged, classically educated caste, removed from the real centers of power in the state bureaucracy or in the military-industrial-labor complex, protected from the pockets of material suffering in France and the rest of the world.

The Parisian intelligentsia create and discard ideological systems with equal ease. Eloquence for the sake of eloquence has replaced the fetishistic worship of pure art, abstract art, pure reason, pure shock appeal or pure alienation. Discourse in Paris thrives on self-reference and impunity. (Barthes, in a half-mocking, half-desperate piece of narcissism, reviewed his own autobiographical study, *Barthes on Barthes.*) Language and speech give rise to ever increasing concentric circles with no identifiable center. Language studies have developed into a spider's web with no spider, no insects to be caught, and no apparent way out. Just as eloquence has replaced clarity and morally resonant committed thought, so too has social thought become confused with verbal sleight of hand. Gimmicks have substituted themselves for the honest working through of complex human problems, of problems that require more than ingenious interpretations of texts.

The Parisian cultural sector (perhaps easily defined as the half million readers of *Le Monde*; perhaps, more complexly, composed of liberal professionals, managers, technocrats, teachers and students) reinforces the illusions and hyperbolic quality of its celebrated thinkers. Taking positions in Paris has long been a necessary, if nuanced art, a way of being *au courant*, a ritualized way of inserting oneself into the nexus of Parisian cultural politics. The cultural public consumes, mirrors and imitates; it defines itself for or against rhetorical chapels, absorbing the latest book

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osmotically, gobbling up advance aesthetic movements and imbibing scientific methodologies as if they were vintage wines contained in the newest, flashiest bottles.

One need not view *The New Yorker* as the last word on the cultural and political habits of the Parisians. *New Yorker* irony, like its cartoons, often dissolves into the trivial one-liner; its sarcasm often slides into an impoverished, genteel cynicism without deep insight of visceral empathy. To be sure, *The New Yorker* takes a part for the whole, the manifest form for the latent content. Much of the hyperbolic and histrionic side of contemporary Parisian thought stems not from the seminal structuralist thinkers but rather from the excesses of the New Philosophers, the unsubstantiated claims of French anti-psychiatry, the posturings of ultra-leftist chapels, and some unserious journalistic writings.

Structuralism is synonymous with language and with excess. Structuralists examine language, directing their inquiries into its labile forms and functions. Since language is conceptualized as movable, its essence can never be pinned down. They assume that meaning can be infinitely multiplied, that texts have plural significances, that language is displaced endlessly in series. Structuralists establish dynamic relations in terms of textual difference and multiplicity. They reject the ideas of identity or similarity as stale metaphysical and non-verifiable notions. Structuralists do not believe in philosophical systems. Interpretation involves putting together a coherent combination or deriving laws about series. Structuralists oppose all methodologies that posit a center, a conducting thread, or a unifying ideational content in a text. They view the postulation of a whole or autonomous subject as a chimera. Instead they see the subject as wandering, dispersed, nomadic, disordered, in the process of permanent transformation. Ego psychology is dismissed as a false construct, a wish fulfillment. A structuralist hero, if not a complete contradiction in terms, would be one without identity, perfectly schizoid. Structuralist critics move from destabilized discourses to incomplete, unstoppable, discontinuous formulations about thinking. A text, in turn, becomse a void: the reader or critic is assigned the task of filling that emptiness. The project is ultimately vain because structuralists hold that all interpretations are tentative, hypothetical, simultaneously probable and improbable. At its most trivial, structuralism is a radical form of relativism. As an antidote to rigidity or to simplistic dualisms, it is a sweeping indictment of dogma and of non-referential synthetic thinking. Most structuralist thinking is anti-authority, while most practitioners are classically authoritarian. Lacan, for example, has played the role of anti-Christ and superstar in French psychoanalytic circles for almost four decades.

A text can never be saturated. Structuralist criticism works by erecting interlocking antitheses: to define emptiness in terms of plenitude; absence in terms of presence; the said in terms of the non-said. The elaboration of these paradoxes circulates words, produces new texts, mini-paradoxes, which function to elucidate old ones. A discourse has no final or definitive meaning. It contains infinite possibilities and myriad meanings. Structuralists do not pose ultimate questions. Truly dense texts — a Freudian case study reworked by Lacan, a kinship rite deciphered by Lévi-Strauss, a Balzac story decoded by Barthes — cannot be reduced to a single essence; one cannot assign a unified truth to it. Truth, if not altogether banished from the structuralist canon, is viewed as fragmentary, fleeting, or a potential instrument of domination— a denial of pleasure, freedom, silence, difference. Thus, no totalizing synthesis can be achieved, no dialectic produced, which can account for the ensemble of structures in the universe, even if that universe is restricted to texts, bracketed off from material

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reality and social existence outside of language. Consequently, as a method of knowledge, structuralism repudiates the ideals and expectations of humanists, moralists, historicists, and individualists.

John Sturrock's volume focuses its attention on five representative French structuralist thinkers. His book provides short, succinct essays on the main proponents of the structuralist ideology over the last 30 years. This is a useful publication, even if slightly outdated now that Barthes has died, now that Lacan seems to be in eclipse or decline, and now that Foucault seems to be rethinking his vast outpouring of books. Structuralism deserves a critical scrutiny because of its uneven impact on a variety of discplines from anthropology to literary criticism, from philosophy to psychoanalysis, from the analysis of popular culture to the discussion of cooking.

These new "prophets of Paris" — Lévi-Strauss, Barthes, Foucault, Lacan and Derrida — all live, work, teach, write, think in Paris; all are prophets in spite of themselves. They eschew the priestly pretentions of the intellectual, preferring the apparently more humble task of decentering, destabilizing, desacralyzing, demystifying, and deconstructing. Most would, and have, refused the label structuralist. As discourses about discourse are disseminated, the old virtue of clear prose and of conceptually precise formulation has been radically revised. Structuralism has served as an invitation to offend established canons, including the deification of lucidity. The awkward "And Since" from the work's title refers to Derrida, the youngest of the group (born in 1930), and the one most commonly thought of as "post-structuralist."

Each essay is written by a well-informed scholar who is generally sympathetic to the structuralist method and assumptions. The critics follow the structuralist approach; typically, they provide only a perfunctory biographical sketch (two or three sentences at the end of the essay, hardly more than a parenthetical remark). No effort is made to situate a particular thinker into the cultural or political context of Paris, or some other social, economic or psychological framework. Thinking is discussed almost as if the thinker did not matter. The artificiality and anti-historical nature of structuralism is embraced. Cross references are restricted to earlier or later textual productions by the given writer. No connections are drawn between structuralist perspectives and internal debates in Paris, the events of May 1968, or to reactions to earlier cultural and intellectual developments.

Despite its weaknesses, Sturrock's book provides a condensed overview of recent structuralist thinking. The figures he includes are or have been controversial. However, there are some significant omissions. French structuralism borrows from, creatively misreads, several older intellectual traditions. All of the thinkers in this volume have been profoundly influenced by the Swiss linguist, Ferdinand de Saussure, himself a contemporary of Freud. Sturrock should have included an introductory, expository essay on the fundamental ideas and contradictions of Saussure's work. This would also help the reader grasp the seductive quality of his linguistic theory, as well as understand the divergences of Saussure's system with that of analytic philosophy of transformational grammar. Just as French existentialism derived partially from the 19th-century writings of Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, so French structuralist theory is also a return to the past. Lacan has transformed his return to Freud into a slogan, a banner, upon which he hoped to build his legitimacy. Lévi-Strauss has generously indicated his debt to Durkheim, Freud, Marx and Rousseau. Foucault, sometimes obliquely, sometimes transparently, reveals his fidelities to Roussel, Artaud, Nietzsche, and anarchistic thought. Barthes emerged as the cultural antennae of his age

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for the last 30 years. A contemporary intellectual history of Paris could be written simply by tracing his itinerary. Derrida himself has only "advanced" our knowledge by returning to German phenomenology; his first book was a translation of Husserl's *Origin of Geometry*.

Similarly, Sturrock's volume excludes an essay on Louis Althusser and the ambiguous penetration of structuralist thinking into Marxist, Maoist and leftist circles in France. Because of the current crisis of Marxism, Western and Eastern, and because of the recent tragic events in Althusser's personal life, we would have welcomed a critical article on his contribution. It might have clarified the extent to which structuralism impoverishes or deepens our understanding of Marxism. Reading Marx's texts rigorously, at least according to the Althusserian method, may push the scholasticizing of Marxism to an extreme limit, thereby making antiseptic its critical philosophy and its revolutionary practice.

As a synchronic method of analysis, structuralism may not be applicable to realities that are extra-linguistic. However, there is no reality that can be perceived, thought about, and communicated that does not involve language. Opponents of structuralism have pointed out that not all human antagonisms can be compressed into textual interpretation. Social existence, intrapsychic conflict, the modalities of lived experience in concrete, social circumstances, all these processes have a texture and a vital quality ignored by structuralist theory. The insurgent students of May 1968 intuited the poverty of this ideology exclaiming that "a structure cannot descend into the streets'; that is, that real people live, suffer and make their own history in situations not of their choosing, but both environment and the will to resist are real. Recently, I paraphrased that piece of poetic graffiti at a scholarly conference. My point was to insist that events, unhappiness, and resistance could not be collapsed into the terms of discourse analysis. A wag in the audience replied: "A street is a structure."

Dan Sperber's essay on Lévi-Strauss makes several important points about the French anthropologist. He finds Lévi-Strauss attractive because of his versatility and eclecticism, his authentic openness to perceptions from a variety of disciplinary perspectives. In Lévi-Strauss the artist coexists with the scientist, the classifier with the synthesizer, the poet with the ethnologist, and the surrealist with the Marxist. In what other major thinker does one find the geologist concerned with psychoanalytic innovations? Sperber suggests that we translate *la pensée sauvage* as "untamed thinking," rather than savage, bestial, uncivilized mental activity. Lévi-Strauss' work leads to a re-evaluation of the concept of the primitive, having mapped out the modalities of untamed thinking in so-called primitives. It is no longer possible to see primitives as children or under-developed specimens. Rather, they think abstractly, complexly, morally and metaphysically. His perspective questions traditional Western ideas of scientific progress, making us more skeptical about how far we have advanced in symbolic, mythical, and folkloric forms of thinking. Sperber grasps the breathtaking grandeur of Lévi-Strauss' project: to understand thoroughly the psychic unity of humanity. Of course, Lévi-Strauss is a first-generation structuralist, and somehow he has retained a relatively sanguine and tidy view of the possibilities of human knowledge. Such methodological optimism and universalism are not shared by the subsequent generations of structuralists.

John Sturrock presents Barthes as a charming, intelligent, sophisticated but essentially unoriginal cultural critic. What is seductive about Barthes the man of letters is his capacity to bridge the gap between creative writing and academic

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scholarship. Readers of Barthes rightly find his prose coquettish, precious, versatile, clever. The ensemble of his work is the articulation of a sensibility. His writing contains flashing insights, sparkling formulations, witty perceptions, a visual component. He is weakest when he tries to be systematic and rigorous. He is strongest when he writes as the hedonist, approaching a text as a gourmet would relish a fine meal. If reading is equivalent to the enjoyment of a good couscous, then Barthes also showed that a discourse can be a verbal festival — an unlimited garden of earthly delights. Late in his life, he insisted on the erotic relationship between writer, text and reader, with the body being the mediating agency between that triangular structure. To map out a text, following Barthes' example, is to engage in an exercise in the arbitrary.

All of Barthes' writing can be seen as a sum of destructions; and he always claimed that his project meant the exploration of the artificial rationality of language. Barthes himself recognized no single truth, no set of privileged relations, no absolute hierarchy, in his personal scale of values. His critical method involved decomposing and deforming a text. This is best illustrated in *S-Z,* where the will to disintegrate saturates the work to the extent to which the writer, Balzac, becomes almost dissolved. Barthes' universe is one where harmony and synthesis are excluded, having been replaced by discontinuity and rupture. His hatreds are by now notorious: he detests naturalism and realism, all forms of bourgeois idealism, biography as a genre, the psychoanalysis of authors (not texts), and all didactic art forms (not Brecht). Reading Barthes requires an appreciation of his technique of dispersing, of breaking up concentration, of denying the integration of the subject, and of ridding oneself of received opinions. Sturrock depicts Barthes as a pluralistic and centrifugal critic, as the last of the appealing eclectics. Historically, he provided legitimacy to structuralism within the realm of the Parisian literary left.

Hayden White's essay on Foucault is characteristically perspicacious. It is a model of the "tropological" perspective on intellectual history. White emphasizes Foucault's deep skepticism about words and language. Foucault distrusts the ability of words to represent accurately things, thought or people. From his archeological assumptions, from his view that all knowledge is fleeting, from his fascination with surfaces, vertical structures, and ruptures, Foucault writes with great empathy and compassion for the excluded and oppressed victims of history. He resurrects the forgotten and silenced from the dustbin of the archives, the overlooked chronicle, the never-read historical narrative. It is not accidental that Foucault's major works deal with deviants, criminals, the insane and the persecuted. His philosophical-historical treatises document and interpret the ways in which these groups have been deceived and duped by the establishments (scientific, legal, criminological, medical) of their day. He writes from a powerful libertarian and anti-deterministic bias, embodied in the spirit of the rebellious students of May-June 1968.

Power, according to White, is Foucault's real interest; and in his *Discipline and Punish* and volume one of *The History of Sexuality,* he has relentlessly unmasked the disciplinary apparatuses of ethical systems and systems of knowledge that serve to classify, restrict, police, normalize, and observe vast (ostensibly dangerous and marginal) sectors of the population. Foucault has demonstrated the multiple ways in which language has contributed to social control over the last 300 years. From linguistic modes of understanding, he believes that strategies for resistance to power can be elaborated. White points out how Foucault's radical doubt has increasingly given way to a love of facile paradox and "negative apocalypse." White concludes his

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essay on a devastating note, by mentioning that Foucault's methodological and epistemological approach is grounded in an 18th- and 19th-century form of rhetoric, which is now discredited and outmoded. He wonders why Foucault has not examined his own theoretical repertoire with the same analytical skills he has deployed on other disciplinary apparatuses.

Malcolm Bowie's study of Lacan steers clear of the French psychoanalyst's most controversial stances: his version of psychoanalytic technique, his clinical perspective, and his ideas on analytical training at institutes. Bowie grudgingly admits, but de-emphasizes, that Lacan's intellectual style smacks of the buffoon. He insists that we appreciate Lacan's rethinking of Freud without being deflected by his personal arrogance and grandiosity, that we tolerate his obscurantist prose and his cult of theory. Bowie situates Lacan at the cusp between Freud and Saussure, the effect of which is a major reinvention of both psychoanalysis and linguistics. Lacan has abandoned Freud's desire for psychoanalysis to be subsumed under science; Lacan's generalizations cannot be tested for predictability or verifiability according to traditional empirical strategies. Rather, his theories are confirmed by the methods of structural linguistics. The return to Freud has also resulted in many radical departures from contemporary psychoanalytic theory and practice; Lacan, for instance, has repudiated typologies, diagnostic categories, characterology, and current psychoanalytic wisdom about ego development for their static and puerile conceptual function. He polemically rejects the idea of an autonomous ego, viewing it as an illusion; for him the ego is the realm of deep resistance, the repository of absence, incompleteness, and spurious knowledge. Lacan's writings on the subject posit a permanently fragmented self, decentered, empty, mobile; he practices psychoanalysis with no expectation of providing coherence, cure, or reliable strength to the ego.

Most of Lacan's writings were first delivered as speeches or seminar presentations. His style of writing is close to speech, to poetry, to the rhetorical and stylistic modes of automatic speaking. His writings are illogical, nonsensical in a form paralleling an analysand's free associations and the freely suspended attention of the analyst. Such contradictory forms of speech do not make sense to the uninitiated in psychoanalytic method. To be initiated, in turn, means having access to Lacan's version of the unconscious as a creation of languages. Words make man. Man is a creature who speaks. If the unconscious is structured like a language (according to Lacan's famous dictum), then that structure is coherent and universal only if one grasps its endless displacements, its disobedience, its untamable quality. The unconscious is the discourse of the other insofar as we carry gaps, incapacities, permanently unfulfilled longings in us all the time.

Lacan claims that contemporary psychoanalytic theory has mistakenly attempted to discipline or unseat the primary process by rendering it in a closed system. He asserts that the unconscious cannot be bottled up, categorized, domesticated, immobilized. Part of Lacan's project is to liberate psychoanalytic discourse from the arbitrary constraints of Freud's followers and codifiers. Returning to Freud means returning to the unconscious at the level of language. It is here, supposedly, that one thinks dangerously, that one's ideas oscillate between symbolic absences and presences. By language Lacan is referring to the signifier, or to the sound realm of speech. The signifying chain is the best guide to the unconscious, along with the study of metaphor and metonymy. In Lacan's theory, consequently, there is an abundance of word plays, jokes, puns, and witty reworkings of speech patterns. This approach is consistent with his postulation of the unconscious as plural, layered, involuted, uncodifiable,

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unstoppable. Lacan's id, following his surrealist precursors, is poetic, polyphonic, and overdetermined. Because the unconscious does not recognize negations, much of Lacan's theory plays on contradiction and self-contradiction. Many readers are dismayed by his style, without realizing that for him nonsense is neither simply nonsense, nor accidental, but rather that it represents a form of abundance. The unconscious is our home, yet it knows no limits, no destination, no conclusion. Here indeed everything is possible, including the senseless. For Bowie, finally, Lacan's importance lies in his creative reinterpretation of Freud's texts and in his attempt to revaluate psychoanalytic discourse by focusing on the linguistic components of the "talking cure."

Jonathan Culler argues that Derrida's method relies on a rigorous application of negative paradox. Derrida has established a decentering style of reading literary texts and philosophical discourses. He has set himself up as an opponent of all theoretical, metaphysical, and hierarchical systems; his strategy of interpretation works by critically intervening to illustrate holes, gaps, inconsistencies, and blind spots in a given piece of writing. Such a technique, Culler holds, is essentially negative: it involves a complicated process of undoing, of deciphering through the mobilization of linguistic modes of double readings and oppositional constructions. Deconstructing a narrative is a way of affirming the multiplicity of difference and of displacement in language. Meaning can never be reduced to a single principle or essence, but is constantly disseminated.

While playful in his best critical pieces, Derrida tends to attribute to the deconstructing critic more insight and knowledge than the author in question. Every text, almost by definition, contains implicit contradictions and blind spots. The task of undoing these paradoxes involves elaborate semantic dispersals, the working through and breaching of contradictions from within theoretical frameworks. Thus, language production is unstoppable, everything is in movement. Derrida also delights in questioning, if not displacing, his own categories and critical maneuvers. Deconstructing forces the critic to return to language as the key to all difference and signification. For Derrida, Culler explains, language can be exceeded but never dispensed with. Language determines and makes possible all events in the universe, even though writing produces an ambiguous access to the writer, and at best, an undecidable interpretation of truth. Prior structures — language — give rise to new events (that is, texts). New events can best be comprehended by double readings, supplements, and strategic interventions that invert, displace and destabilize writing.

The 1960s and 1970s in Paris were a period of flamboyant theorizing. For two decades philosophers and philosophical critics replaced the novelist and the politically *engagé* intellectual, usurping their influence in French cultural life. A famous French cartoon, dating from 1966, caricatured Lévi-Strauss, Barthes, Foucault and Lacan (Derrida had not yet emerged). The four leading structuralist philosophers were pictured in a tropical setting clad in grass skirts. In this variation on paintings by Gauguin and Manet, the four Parisian structuralists were portrayed talking, presumably holding forth on their theories. The structuralist *dejeuner sur l'herbes* has endured for over 20 years. One wonders how much of a party it has been. The self-confidence, arrogance, and verbal facility of those French thinkers is apparent. That they are intoxicated with language and exegesis is quite plain. But their lasting contribution remains unclear. There is a great deal of facile paradox in structuralist thinking, in addition to a massive dose of formalistic posturing and of taking things apart. Surely that is a sign of the times, part of the post-modernist response

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to and negation of intellectual life.

The structuralist professors of Paris — whether in grass skirts or velour suits — have revealed the infinite possibilities of textual interpretation. *New Yorker* journalism tends to be cynical, to dismiss ideas cavalierly, to remain on the outside. Such a perspective misses the truly subtle and impressive penetration of contemporary Paris' most self-reflexive thinkers. The five structuralist thinkers of Sturrock's volume, despite their differences, write at the interface of disciplines. All have developed erudite and powerful techniques of exegesis. All claim to have incorporated what was valid, discarded what was invalid, in the methodologies of linguistics, psychoanalysis, Marxism, and Nietzschean culture criticism. All are committed to the project of re-examining the assumptions, presumptions, and consequences of the human sciences. Their work, in contrast to the decline of the humanities in America, and in contrast to the increasingly marginal quality of theoretical work in the social sciences, has demonstrated the primacy of historical, anthropological, literary and psychoanalytic studies in France. The structuralists play the culture game with a dubious, perverse, and altogether problematic attitude toward preserving and surpassing that culture. Their form of philosophizing may result not only in the end of philosophers but ultimately in the dissolution of philosophical discourse.

Nevertheless, structuralist method sterilizes historical process, impoverishes social and psychological theory, while disseminating increasingly sophisticated and abstract forms of hermeutics. In spilling a great deal of ink about discourse, they have forgotten, or chosen to neglect, the points of intersection between criticism and action, theory and human fate. This is a severe limitation, one that truly deep and humble thinkers have always remembered, and which is perhaps summed up best in Hamlet's reminder to his double: "There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

David James Fisher

Manuel Castells. *The Urban Question: A Marxist Approach.* Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1977. 471 pages. $10.95 paperbound.

The City is a reification. It is such an imposing phenomenon that it tempts those who study it never to make connections with the larger reality. This is the message of the new urban literature which tries to step outside the city's walls.

Two fundamental errors are typical. First, there is the empiricist mistake of taking the appearance of concentrated activity as a determining factor in social relations, rather than as the result of a particular social formation. Second, there is the concomitant formalist error of establishing the city as a category of human action, restricting analysis of "problems" solely there. By avoiding political, economic, and historical aspects, modern American sociology has concentrated on delimiting a particular urban culture which is claimed to be determining modern life.

Castells' *The Urban Question*, is often cited as a landmark in the efforts to resolve problems raised by traditional definitions of the city.[1] Dragging the heavy apparatus of Althusserian Marxism, Castells attempts a "Marxist Approach" to the city. Thus,

1. For examples, see the remarks in J.R. Mellor, *Urban Sociology in an Urbanized Society* (London, 1977), pp. 2, 7, and *passim*; in Abrams and Wrigley, eds., *Towns in Societies*

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the "structural laws of human history," which Althusserians claim as Truth, become the appropriate context within which to locate the city. Explaining his "theoretical venture," Castells warns of "the slow and difficult work that has to be undertaken in matching the general concepts of historical materialism with situations and processes very different from those that were the basis for the production of these concepts. However, we are trying to extend their scope without any changes of perspective, for the production of new concepts must take place in the development of fundamental theses, without which there can be no deployment of a theoretical structure, but merely a juxtaposition of 'intermediary hypotheses.' There is nothing dogmatic about this method of work, insofar as attachment to a particular perspective does not derive from some sort of fidelity to principles, but from the 'nature of things' (that is to say, from the objective laws of human history)" (p. 3). This urge for closure and adherence to fundamental theses is tantamount to an admission of dogmatism and renders his disclaimer inoperative.

Castells' attempts to produce "tools of knowledge" are motivated by an "astonishment" over the state of capitalist society and its inability to deal with the "urban crisis." He calls for an "International of 'social scientists' who... meet in the conviction that cities are made by *people* and with the determination that they should be made for people." (p. x). But his interest in returning the city to the people is incomprehensible in light of his theory of knowledge and his theory of society. Following Althusser, Castells not only separates subject from theoretical object, and theory from practice, but isolates knowledge from interests as well. This scientific Marxism can no more explain its revolutionary intentions that its more vulgar ancestors, and in its relentless battle against revisionist subjectivism, removes human interest from consideration altogether.

Moving beyond initial epistemological considerations, Castells locates the true significance of the city. "Every form of matter has a history or, rather, it is its history... to read this history, to discover the laws of its structuring and transformation, one must break down, by theoretical analysis, what is given in a practical synthesis," (p. 7). Lacking such a "practical synthesis" in the case of the city, Castells concedes the utility of a more genetic approach. He assumes a "false theoretical innocence" and lays out a review of the literature on the development of the city. This is official Althusserian procedure, proceding from the ideologically polluted raw material of "Generality I" in the hopes of producing an eventual "Generality III".[2] Castells demonstrates that empirical definitions of urban size, a traditional ploy to avoid ideological contamination, are far too arbitrary and ambiguous to enlighten. Population counts, densities, and other quantifications have failed to explain other phenomenon associated with urbanism. Indeed, all sorts of social formations, from preindustrial to late capitalist, have exhibited high concentrations of people, with little else common among them.[3] Castells shows that the various roles performed by cities in different social formations — especially feudal and capitalist — demonstrate its dependance on a wider context of social relations. A reprise of the rise of the urban systems of the U.S. and France (Chapter 2) demonstates this dependance of the city on trends in social,

(Cambridge, 1979), p. 5; and Castells' essays collected in C.G. Pickvance, *Urban Sociology: Critical Essays* (New York, 1976).

2. *For Marx* (New York, 1969), pp. 182ff.

3. Cf. Gideon Sjoberg, *The Preindustrial City, Past and Present* (Glencoe, Ill., 1960), p. 329. Sjoberg suggests technology, and secondarily, social power, as the forces that shape the differences between pre-industrial and industrial cities.

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economic, and political developments, but does not suggest to Castells any "historicist" or "culturalist" explanations. Laws of historical materialism are what he seeks, and the relative autonomy of individual cases is not permitted to distract him.

By demonstating that the urbanization of the New World is not the same as in Europe — namely, that value is exported through, not produced in these cities, and that fewer primary-sector jobs are produced proportionate to urban populations — Castells convincingly shows that urbanization can no longer be taken as a concomitant or a synonym of modernization or "development". The concept of dependance, of uneven development, more accurately depicts Latin American urbanization. Castells correctly reveals the world economic perspective which gives the lie to shelves of modernization literature. (Chapter 3). This is, of course, no news for scholars who have worked with various forms of dependancy theory for years.

Castells attempts to cap this debuking of the received tradition by distinguishing between apparently similar urban units in capitalist and socialist countries. To prove that it is not industrialization, bureaucratization, accelerating technological change, and density which determine urban centers in the West, but rather the mode of production, he distinguishes the socialist city from the capitalist: "The market is no longer the economic regulator and therefore ceases to influence urbanization directly. The principle factor of social organization is the state, and through the state, the party in power." (p. 65).

In discussing his example of party activity, Castells employs the passive voice. In the Soviet Union, for example, we find that although "it was decided to slow down concentraton in the cities... it was impossible to maintain the ceiling of 5 million inhabitants in Moscow (it had 8,500 in 1963)". (p. 67). It appears that the party's political line was not the only determinant of urban growth. How did those extra three and one half million inhabitants escape the party's dominant influence? Castells does not explain. Castells uses China as another example of socialist urban policy. He points out that "in 1963 20 million rural migrants were returned to the countryside... in order to check the right-wing deviations that had appeared." (p. 69). The method by which one came to be declared a migrant and not a resident is not explained. Such pseudoscientific sociological categories are clearly defined by an interest in social control. This relocation freed up much office space for urban housing, of which very little had been built since the revolution. "One only has to think of the shifting of populations away from the city center to set up offices in the capitalist societies, and the difference in the use of space becomes quite obvious." (p. 70). The difference in the use of people by party members, property owners, bureacrats, and social scientists, however, is not obvious.

The distinction between capitalist and socialist cities is crucial to Castells' insistence on the dependance of the city on a social structure conceived in Althusserian terms. But at the same time it is employed, it is this very concept of structure which is supposed to be at stake. Castells says that he is testing the utility of the very categories he uses to demonstrate crucial differences between apparently similar urban units. He admits, for example, that economic and social roles that Marx showed to be necessary to capitalism in fact also exist in the "Soviet, non-capitalist cities," namely that workers in each system are rationalized and fragmented. Rhetorically, he asks "are we not confronted by a type of behaviour bound up with the urban ecological form?" Confidently, he responds: "if we hold to a scientific definition of capitalism, we can affirm that...the articulation of the dominant mode of production called capitalism may account for the appearance of such a system of relations and of a new ecological

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form" (p. 81). Since "formal similarities" between capitalist and socialist cities have meaning only when related to the social structure to which they belong, Castells' criteria for distinguishing cities depend upon a definition of social structure which his examinations of the city was supposed to be testing. The tidiness of such circular argument is typical of Althusserian theorizing.

To defend this "scientific" theory of the city, Castells vehemently attacks, especially as employed in the work of Henri Lefebvre (pp. 86-95), the attribution of "voluntarist" intentions or control to those urban residents who believe that they have some influence over their daily lives. But nothing in his criticism of previous conceptions of the city dictates the annihilation of human intention from history in the name of a more adequate theory. Only an *a priori* acceptance of the Althusserian reading of Marx could motivate Castells to expunge intention and consciousness from human action and render it mere behavior.

Castells unmasks the myth of urban culture, and points out the political function of a social theory which naturalizes social conflict into a set of "urban problems" common to all city dwellers. Problems occur, however, when he moves to correct the traditional errors of urban theory with a contribution of his own. Proceding from a scientific reformulation of the contaminated evidence of Generality I, he moves to the level of Generality II, the "theory of the science at the (historical) moment under consideration."[4] This is not a matter of venturing anything as unscientific as "intermediary hypotheses," as Castells reminded us at the outset. It involves rather the introduction as theory of Althusserian conclusions about the nature of the categories of knowledge adequate to an understanding of society. This is accomplished in a discussion of space which begins: "Space is a material product, in relaton to other material elements — among others, men, who themselves give space... a form, a function, a social signification... It is a question, then, of establishing, in the same way as for any other real object, the structural and conjunctural laws that govern its existence and transformation..." (p. 115). He then concludes: "One must go farther than the ideological opposition between the determination of space by nature and its shaping by culture, to unite these two terms in a problematic that recognizes the specificity of the humanly social, without seeing it as a deliberate creation which cannot be explained by laws." (p. 121). To accomplish this, he intends: "to extend the field of the analysis of space, the fundamental concepts of historical materialism,... a dialectical fusion of those different elements whose fragmentation in terms of 'factors' forbids, for the moment, the construction of a structural theory of space." (P. 122).

Aside from the materialist metaphysics, one first notes the spurious distinction between his scientific approach to society and one which sees it as a "deliberate creation which cannot be explained by laws." Obviously, some theories of deliberate behaviour can and have been reduced to laws — by social psychology's various positivistic forms. Equally, voluntaristic behaviour can be causally explained and need not be merely random. Finally and more significantly, to question whether social action can be reduced to laws is not the same thing at all as ascribing deliberate action to the individuals involved. Indeed, richly complex, historical views of the significance of human activity which deny any simple, rationalistic reduction of behaviour are the theories least likely to talk in terms of laws.

The key assumption smuggled in here, however, is the necessity for a structural theory of space. We have seen that the various versions of urban theory have obscured the relation of the city to the social whole — however defined — and therefore artificially restricted to the "urban" any discussion of space. Castells' concern with a

4. *For Marx*, p. 184.

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structural theory of space is not determined by the specific inadequacies of traditional theory. It is determined by his initial choice of Althusserian categories, not as a potentially fruitful approach, but as a doctrine. Despite his claims, Castells cannot treat these categories otherwise, for they exist not as science, but only as a system of beliefs: "Let us recall that any concrete society and therefore any social form (for example, space) may be understood in terms of the historical articulation of several modes of production. By mode of production (Castells means) the particular matrix of combinations of the fundamental instances (systems of practices) of the social structure: essentially the economic, the politico-institutional, and the ideological." (p. 125).

What we are asked to "recall" — adding a patina of shared common sense to a set of tenuous assumptions — is of course nothing more than the recitation of the now rather tiresome Althusserian catechism, a theory of society whose positivism, scientific fetishism, and Kantian formalism have been exposed and castigated elsewhere.[5] The insights which structuralism can bring to social theory are far from unimportant,[6] but Castells' uncritical appropriation of one of its most tendentious variants is far from a modest attempt to test the utility of Marxism in urban studies. The assuption of the categorial truth of Marx's description of the 19th-century capitalist mode of production as an adequate foundation for all knowledge of society is a religious, not a scientific act. The conclusions to be drawn from such assumptions and the attitudes in which they can be taken seriously are far from innocent. Castells recapitualtes Althusser's appropriation of Marx's structuralist moments, and by refusing to introduce elements not already predetermined by those moments (as read by Balibar and Althusser), Castells offers us not a first step toward a new theory of the city, but membership in the Party.

Declaring Production, Consumption, Exchange, Administration, and Ideology to be the necessary and sufficient categories of analysis for society, Castells explains the correct procedure for deploying them in "concrete research": "Let me say at once that it is not a question of setting out data and then constructing the theory. For the concrete analyses already obey a certain theorization... Theoretically, we ought to begin by exposing the whole of the structure in order to deduce the behaviour of each element." (p. 127). Since this "previous theoretization" of the "whole of the structure" has not yet been accomplished, we are resigned to what Castells calls "partial research," not be confused with "intermediary hypotheses," the hallmark of vulgar empiricism. To maintain theoretical rigor, "The internal analysis of each element of the urban structure must, if it is not to remain intuitive, apply one single principle. The specifications must not introduce new elements in relation to those already defined theoretically." (p. 238).

Since he is not allowed to admit elements not already accounted for by the theory, it seems unlikely that Castells will suffer the embarassment of contradictory evidence.

5. Among the numerous examinations of Althusser, see François George, "Reading Althusser," *Telos* 7 (Spring 1971); Robert D'Amico, "The Contours and Coupures of Structuralist Theory," *Telos* 17 (Fall 1973); an early essay by Paul Piccone, "A Structuralist Marxism?" *Radical America*, September 1969, discusses the positivist aspects of Althusser's methodology. The title essay in E.P. Thompson's *The Poverty of Theory* (London, 1978) covers a wide range of issues.

6. Besides D'Amico's article cited above, Mark Poster's discussion of Althusser in his *Existential Marxism in Postwar France* (Princeton, 1975) is sympathetic to a point. Indispensable for an understanding of the issues raised by Althusser in particular and structuralism in general is Jean Piaget's *Structuralism* (New York, 1970).

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Having no categories for it, how he could recognize it remains a mystery. Castells seems to think that Althusser's circular production of knowledge from philisophical categories is somehow similar to an experimental method, susceptible to falsification. Althusser's axiom "It has been possible to apply Marx's theory with success because it is 'true'; it is not true because it has been applied with success" is hardly an invitation to sociologists to test his categories against "reality". Althusser's point is that there is no reality *but* theory. Since the fundamental Kantian problematic of the thing-in-itself is incorporated into Castells' project — "there is no congruence between a theoretical element and an empirical reality" (p. 126) — he has already bought Althusser's self-confirming system, despite his claims merely to be testing it.

Armed with this theory, Castells examines volumes of research on the city. Since administrative, cultural, and environmental definitions of the city fail to adequately comprehend their object, Castells attempts his own definition. The "social content" of urban areas seems to be "defined increasingly at the level of the economic... And this is no accident, for it is as if the spacial units were defined in each society according to the dominant instance, characteristic of the mode of production (... economic in capitalism)." (p. 235). This is not the compelling logic of structural laws of human history, but it does represent a possible perspective based on the choice of a few dominant categories of behavior. Pursuing the structural argument, one must ask which sub-element of the economic system is dominant in the structuring of urban space in capitalistic society. Castells discards the element of production, because production is organized across regional areas: "whereas the map of commuter flows usually serves to delimit an urban area. 'The urban,' as a connotation of the processes of reproduction of labor power, and 'urban space', as a means of expressing the articulation of units of such a process — these notions enable us, I think, to approach these questions in a theoretical way." (p. 236). Using commuter flows as a map of urban areas, of course, predates this "Marxist" definition of the city. Urban sociology has often employed such abstraction in its attempts to reduce the city to a measurable unit. The rhetoric of the "reproduction of labor power" is all that is new here. The difference between this Marxist theory of the city and that of bourgeois social science is not much greater than the difference between the socialist city and the capitalist city: both distinctions hinge upon a "scientific socialism" whose categories are imported from an avowedly idealist epistemology. The content of those categories is filled, as were the categories of their Kantian predecessors, by means of choices which are in the end arbitrary, not imperative. This version of Marxist social science is a bad mirror image of the bourgeois science it claims to replace.

But even within this constraint, Castells cannot easily defend the specificity of the city as the locus of the reproduction of labor power in the face of evidence just as strong as in his own category of production that labor — as labor — is organized at least regionally, often nationally, and increasingly internationally. Labor migrations demonstrate that, as labor, people are not organized in any obvious way in the cities. Germany's labor pool is international, allowing the expulsion of those *"Gastarbeiter"* who might otherwise become "unemployed". New York's and California's unemployed are refugees from punitive state welfare systems and uneven regional industrial development. Much of the economy of the American Southwest has depended upon extra-legal migration patterns which authorities have regulated as an irrigation system. It is regional shifts in white collar labor — following shifts in capital — that characterize the rise of the Sunbelt cities.[7] After taking us toward a constructive

7. David C. Perry and Alfred Watkins, eds., *The Rise of the Sunbelt Cities* (Beverly Hills,

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concept of the city in relation to other complex aspects of society, Castells has simply replaced the old definitions with another. "It may be necessary," as J.R. Mellor has pointed out in her discussion of Castells' and other redefinitions of the city, "to accept that urbanization (of whole societies) entails loss of any ordered environment and that the logic of space is inconclusive."[8] Philip Abrams claims: "that in an important analytical sense the city *is not* a social entity; that we have been victims of the fallacy of misplaced concreteness in treating it as such; and that one object of urban history and urban sociology now might be to get rid of the concept of the town."[9] To accept such a vision need not render urban study complacent or irrelevant. In fact, to quote Abrams again, "many of the best case studies and many of the most convincing general commentaries in the field of urban history prove to be, often implicitly, studies of and commentaries on action and relationships within a complex of domination; the town or towns in question are treated as expressions and realizations of that sort of struggle."[10]

After his attempt at a redefinition of the city, Castells turns his attention to a study of such struggle, at the level of the "system of agent-supports," or in other words at people. Although the term "agent-supports," as are so many other unhappy terms and translations in this book, is not defined, Castells is referring here to Althusser's concept of supports (from Marx's *Trager*") in the division of labor, supports of the different levels of the social structure. As Castells puts it, in discussing the activities of actual historical people who produce the practices which are the structure, "one speaks of places and not of individuals." (p. 266).

To carry out actual research at the level of the system of suports or places in the structure, Castells offers several hypotheses. Significantly, he claims that "the role of the organization is fundamental" in social movements. While the support-agents (or the "masses" in Castells' lexicon) "make possible" the conditions for social change — by acting out their structurally determined roles — the *organization* "is the locus for the articulation with other social practices." For there to be a necessary "union of a sequence of contradictions," there must be "an organization imported from other practices." (p. 272). From behind the curtain the wizard of science is revealed to be the Party, throwing the switches and blowing the smoke. The Party then becomes truth of definition: "There is an urban social movement when there is a correspondance between fundamental structural contradictions in the urban system and a correct line on the part of the organization formed on the crystalization of other practices." (p. 273). Since there is for Castells as "epistemological distinction between everyday perception and theoretical concepts," indeed a "schizophrenic" (sic) "incommunicability between the experience of the masses and scientific work" (p. 273), we already have hints — but not straight answers — about what "other practices" the "correct line" will be "imported" from. The "theoretical practice" of Althusser's science of society will inform the direction of the Party.[11] Castells has not eliminated the urban mythology; he has merely rewritten it in a manner that demands the intervention of the centralized organization.

Calif., 1977). Cf. in particular the essay by Perry and Watkins, "Regional Change and the Impact of Uneven Urban Development", p. 19.

8. *Op.cit.*, p. 234.
9. *Op.cit.*, p. 10.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 31.
11. For a discussion of the origins of this philosophical Leninism, see Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Adventures of the Dialectic* (Evanston, Ill., 1973), Chapter 3, "Pravda," p. 59.

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His analysis of the urban planning process uncovers a plot in capitalist cities between municipal administrators, local property owners and developers, and the national government to use urban renewal for private profit and social control. Control of the city has supposedly been consolidated and emerging contradictions suppressed by timely intervention in its spatial configuration. By seeing urban politics as the function of specific urban policies, Castells has missed keys to the larger issues implied by the urban crisis today. National and, increasingly, international shifts in capital have left the older cities, founded on the former industrial base, high and dry. Cities such as Detroit become islands of surplus labor and space, punished for their higher levels of unionization and social programs. Their tax bases wither while the cities of new capital such as Houston build on cheaper labor and capital-intensive operations.

Finally, a structuring silence echoes from the absence of any discussion of the role of social science in the theory and practice of urban planning. Those who devised the analyses of urban life and took it upon themselves to interpret the true meaning of the slum, the ghetto, and the suburb are not identified. The power derived from the possession of self-proclaimed scientific knowledge of the laws of society is not mentioned. The story of official urban planning has been the story of social scientists providing the goals and justification for the exercise of state power over society, not only to rationalize the effects of market-based decisions, but to establish the correct urban practice. To many different versions of the true city have been sacrificed houses, neighborhoods, and now whole cities. One speaks, of course, of places, and not of individuals.

James B. Greene Jr.

Paul E. Corcoran. *Political Language and Rhetoric.* Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1979. 216 pages. $14.95.

Frank Burton and Pat Carlen. *Official Discourse: On Discourse Analysis, Government Publications, Ideology and the State.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979. 198 pages. $20.00.

The relation between language and power has recently undergone extensive debate, but few studies have investigated the political use of language. The books reviewed here provide a more focused analysis of the relations of language and politics. Corcoran combines an historical study of rhetoric with the more recent linguistic approaches of McLuhan, Cherry, and Steiner and argues that rhetoric, as an instrument of the oral conveyance of politically relevant information, has been gradually surpassed by literate communication and outstripped by the electronic media. Burton and Carlen, on the other hand, concentrate on the politically motivated use of language in official seeking to legitimate contested administrative practices. The aim of *Official Discourse* is to link the discourse of state documents and the hegemonic structure of the state.

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Corcoran concludes that rhetoric, as a technology of information storage, dispersal, and retrieval, is obsolete. The political consequence of this is that democratic decision-making is effaced by its bureacratic counterpart. "This constriction of public discourse and the separation of political rhetoric from specialized communication have already made traditional parliamentary institutions ceremonial anachronisms so far as the making and administering of public policy is concerned." (p. 204) While this is presented as his conclusion, this argument is Corcoran's presupposition about political affairs. He assumes that democratic institutions are in crisis and that, as a result of the degeneration of political oratory, administrative institutions have taken up the function of information gathering and the formulation of public policy. Yet, the fact that political parties in the U.S. and Australia, Corcoran's examples, advertise candidates rather than provide voters with data, hardly renders parliamentary debate carried out by those politicians anachronistic *per se*.

Corcoran's historical account of language distinguishes four major stages: pre-literate, early literate, literate, and post-literate. Political language has suffered a gradual degeneration to carry information as a result of emerging technologies. Previous forms of oral discourse at each stage retrench in a way that strips them of the ability to carry new information and renders them more decorative and useless. The pre-literate stage consisted of the earliest periods of oral culture based on dance, song, chant, and poetry that reproduced traditions unchanged. Action and oral culture were united through magic and the sacred. The transition to early literate culture was signaled by the emergence of writing and rhetoric as a public performance mixed with political power. The Platonic and Aristotelian battles over dialectic and rhetoric were solidly set in the era of early literacy in which speakers and listeners were required to adjust to the emergent technology of written culture. The "new technique of communication, literacy, placed an unbearable burden upon the old, oral technique.... Literacy's greater efficiency in production and preservation overwhelmed the respective faculties of oral culture, and in the process effectively challenged its claim to be the encyclopedia of culture and the means of transmitting that culture" (p. 31). The impact of this technological shift made possible new forms of expression and criticism which, in the subsequent history of rhetoric, further eroded the unity of action, power, poetic expression, and information characteristic of oral culture.

The conflict of rhetoric and philosophy that shaped much of Greek and Roman culture reemerged, particularly during the Renaissance, as a conflict of rhetoric and logic. The culmination of this development in our time is the use of forms of "non-grammatical" expression "such as equations, mathematical symbols, statistical tables, computing languages, and other semi-linguistic orthographies" (p. 117). The political outcome of technological change has been the withdrawal from the public of linguistic ability essential to political participation. The separation of individual linguistic competence and the technological requirements of conveying and preserving information has rendered political language and rhetoric "archaic structures of emotional declamation, or, increasingly, as a curtain of insubstantial images whose task is to veil, rather than reveal information about the conditions of life." (p. 204)

Corcoran has narrowed the scope of the study and theory of language by defining 'political discourse' as the oral "communication of socially vital information" and 'rhetoric' as the "formal methods of communicating specialized and problematic bodies of such information" (pp. 83, 84). Hence, specific examples of "political rhetoric" developed since the 17th century include "judicial opinions and decrees,

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edicts, official addresses, parliamentary debates, and party convention and political campaigning speeches." (p. 133) Corcoran ignores, however, the crucial interaction of the internal transformation of rhetorical studies and the transformation of politics during the 16th and 17th centuries that ushered in "modern" approaches to politics found in Machiavelli, Bacon, and Hobbes.[1] He footnotes that there have been "important exceptions" to the usurption of rhetoric by literate communication and printing, of which the judicial and legislative use of rhetoric in the Renaissance city-states are examples (p. 134). Yet, he ignores the definitive work which details this history of tensions between rhetoric and scientific method that accompanied the rise of the "modern" approach to politics: Walter Ong's *Ramus: Method, and the Decay of Dialogue*. The development of "place logic," the predominance of the geometric construction of knowledge, and the creation of printing technology each contributed to the development of a fully literate culture and the supplanting of rhetoric by scientific method in political discourse. Ong assumes that logic and experimental method arose on the ruins of speech, but is more careful to demonstrate how Ramus divided rhetoric from dialectic in the medieval trivium by transferring the elements of invention and judgment from rhetoric to dialectic.[2] Of the five parts of classical rhetoric, this only left elocution and pronunciation within the province of rhetoric. This move arbitrarily severed the cognitive and expressive components of rhetoric. Because of his approach to the problem, Corcoran is trapped by his own metaphors of technological development and fails to question whether the apparent supremacy of the scientific approach to politics is justified. Closer scrutiny reveals the relations between rhetoric, science and politics to be gradually changing and still unresolved. Furthermore, Corcoran's definition of political language and rhetoric fails to recognize that, as Derrida forcefully argues, modern notions of writing indicate that it did not supplant, but supplemented the centrality of speech.[3] Corcoran's assumption that science is a more advanced form of acquiring knowledge depends on a reaffirmation of the identity of expression and knowledge that has been taken to be the essence of speech. He assumes the absolute alienation of writing from speech and sees an unquestionable literalness in scientific description stripped of rhetoric. Here the traditional perception of the self-presence and certainty of speech is being ascribed to science. It is only because of the power of the persistent privileging of speech that writing is forced to assume new identities. What Corcoran sees as the degeneration of speech is actually a historical process in which the power of traditional assumptions about speech has been displaced through the division of expression and "truth."

Corcoran's monocausal analysis of historical development points to a fascination with and infection of scientific method in his work. It is odd that he relies on rhetorical skills of deduction, analogy, comparison, exposition, citation, and narrative to inform us that rhetoric is obsolete. A dualism of rhetoric to science, rather than a subordination of rhetoric to science, is the persistent locus of power language in Corcoran's book. He remains blissfully unaware of this dualism, and this very silence seems to lend credibility to his scientific predisposition. More importantly, Corcoran

1. Cf. J.G.A Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment* (Princeton and London, 1975); Eugenio Garin, *Italian Humanism: Philosophy and Civic Life in the Renaissance*, trans. Peter Munz (New York, 1965) and Lauro Martinez, *Power and Imagination, City States in Renaissance Italy* (New York, 1979).

2. Walter Ong, *Ramus: Method and the Decay of Dialogue* (Cambridge, Mass., 1958), p. 270.

3. Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore, 1976), p. 314.

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fails to address the political function of written documents the development of which is concomitant with the rise of the absolutist state and modern bureaucracies. If it were not for his scientific prejudice, Corcoran might see that the complexity of written documents produced by the state provides a basis for extending the application of rhetorical analysis, literary criticism, and linguistic theory beyond the confines of the study of oratory, literature and the humanities. His book speaks with the muffled cry of conservative criticism targeting the transition toward the use of "non-grammatical" forms of information storage and toward the transference of policy formulation to administrative bodies. The reductionist view of language allows Corcoran to evade serious questions about the use of figurative language in the natural and social sciences.

In *Official Discourse,* Burton and Carlen explore just such questions. The authors present an insightful attempt to self-critically apply discourse analysis to a theory of the state within the limited range of judicial documents. *Official Discourse* is an "analysis of state documents concerning contemporary problems in the administration of law and the maintenance of public order" (p. 12). The documents are publications of Royal Commissions, which are investigative bodies set by ministers and supplied with "lay experts" of judges, lawyers, academics or businessmen to make quasi-judicial inquiries into the activities of ministerial or judicial organizations or personnel. The authors' main concern is to understand how "ideological closure" is constructed in state documents within the context of crises of legitimacy and citizen demands for distributive justice or challenging of state policies. The authors' practical intention is to examine the apparent legitimacy granted to state officials' corrupt or inhuman actions. Essentially, this legitimacy is granted on the grounds of legal-rational discourse which is understood by these officials appointed to the commissions as agreeing with common law, a positivistic understanding of epistemological criteria of evidence, and common sense.

The authors examine the linguistic "technology of ideological closure" that binds the "citizen-reader" within the legal and administrative activities of the capitalist state (p. 13). Legitimation crises, the authors assume, arise as popular opposition to the ideology of the state or to specific laws. Discourse found in state documents closes the circle of communication and action between state bureaucrats and citizens by appropriating or incorporating unofficial statements or narratives in order to quell challenges. The political presupposition of this book is that England has already taken the corporatist plunge into imposed austerity, the control of finance capital, high unemployment, and subtle forms of ideological control. The authors assume that corporatism depends on increased disciplining of the population through law rather than overt coercion to cover "legitimation deficits" resulting from challenges to corporatist policies and administration.

The authors are interested in "deconstructing" the reports published from Royal Commissions between 1965 and 1977. Burton and Carlen draw no causal links between economic, political, or discursive practices, but insist that the assumptions of the Royal Commissions investigating system disrupting actions structure the reports' outcomes. The power of such documents lies in their legitimation of administrative practices which may appeal to public order and reform, but serve to hide underlying class tensions and undemocratic political tendencies. The function of official discourse is (1) to establish a format of knowledge and facts created for the formulation of strategies of social control; (2) to vindicate official discourse in the face of challenges in order to maintain an image of "administrative rationality and democratic legality;"

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and (3) to affirm the confidence in rationality and competence of state officials or to exonerate them in cases of malfeasance or corruption (p. 51).

Burton and Carlen build their case on a theory of the state made as a *bricolage* of the works of Habermas, Lacan, Althusser, Foucault, Derrida, and Gramsci. What holds the theory of the state together is an analogy between the relations of the unconscious, desire, and language transferred to relations of citizens, state officials, and the documents they produce. Althusser's essays, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," and "Freud and Lacan," are the unacknowledged paradigms combined in this psychoanalytic theory of the state. It is not assumed that the cohesiveness of the theory nor the impact on the work of state officials in producing texts depends on citizens reading them. The authors disclaim such a concern: "We have not been concerned to evaluate the direct legislative and administrative consequences of official texts. The documents are seen as representing a system of intellectual collusion whereby selected, frequently judicial, intelligentsia transmit forms of knowledge into political practices" (p. 7). It is assumed that textual production to repair "legitimation deficits" initiates and grounds subsequent political practices carried out by Royal Commissions or the bureaucracy. What links the state and citizens is, by analogy, a structure of desire in which distributive justice is never realized, but its absence is disguised by the enforcement of "ideological closure" in official discourse. This policing power of language allows officials to evade substantive epistemological and moral issues through administrative control.

Burton and Carlen include a final meta-theoretical chapter on reading the book itself. The eclecticism of the text was a "calculated risk" made by the authors to demonstrate the limits of theory. The main problem they see in their own work is that the attempt to link a theory of the state with discourse analysis verges on an "Althusserian rationalism" which in the name of science reintroduces the search for closure and threatens to victimize the citizen-reader in a form analogous to the policing action being criticized. Since this disclaimer appears after Burton and Carlen have attempted such a theory, their action looks more like an attempt to leap from a sinking ship. To be generous, their theory swings on the use of the Lacanian analogy of the "mirror phase" as the central figural construction linking their theory and society. The psychoanalytic analogy is used instead of establishing a metonymic, the tropological name for referential discourse, relation between the production of official discourse, the repair of "legitimation deficits," and the political practices of commission officials, judges or bureaucrats. The privileging of metonym here would involve the authors in a theoretical practice à la Althusser and Poulantzas, which would insist that abstractions and theoretical constructs do refer directly to society. This more oblique strategy is, however, evasive. In fact, they explain parenthetically that "whenever we sought temporary refuge in an Althusserian rationalism we were appalled at the profligacy of our theoretical abandonment" (p. 124). This weak self-criticism is filled with ambiguity verging on mock irony. "Abandonment" connotes both withdrawal from and reckless enthusiasm for something. Here it is unclear whether Althusser or theory in general is the object of abandonment. The mock irony is catchy, but unconvincing given the density of their *bricolage*, which hides rather than reveals.

Theoretical closure can be compelled by either science or ideology, but both can be interpreted to lend themselves to technocratic or administrative practices of social control. Attaining some sort of theoretical closure through building a theory which is coherent, comprehensive, and draws causal relations would, in the view of the

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authors, reproduce the relations of the production of official discourse. By analogy, theoretical closure depends on the attempt to exclude paradigms or figural elements of language in order to maintain a desired coherence. The authors attempt to avoid complicity with either form or repression (social or textual) by deconstructing the science-ideology opposition that is the vehicle of the Althusserian search for closure.

However, Burton and Carlen attempt to absolve themselves of Althusserian rationalism by abdicating responsibility for the text altogether. Their defense is nearly unintelligible and is certainly evasive. The text, they admit, is held together by the metaphor of *bricolage* (taken from Lévi-Strauss) which, they also admit, "has closed off (or glossed over) questions concerning the protocol for assessing the internal coherence of *Official Discourse* [and] has raised questions concerning discourse analysis' relevance to theoretically informed political practice" (p. 131). Charges of incoherence or irrelevancy are warded off by claiming that those charges depend on a "metonymic logic" that they assume need not be privileged. The text therefore ends in and is actually structured around an indeterminacy of meaning. That is, in common academic parlance, purposive inconclusiveness. This practice sports in an ocean of linguistic idealism, not so much because it depends on the analogical relations of social and textual authority, but because it casts its insights on the waters of indeterminacy. Such irresponsibility to make textual or political judgments gives a nascent deconstructive logic an unwarranted bad reputation. Moreover, Burton and Carlen try to write themselves out of the text by claiming the authors are the "creation rather than the creators of the text" (p. 130). The "authors" have the gall to assert that "the most acute dilemmas for a theorist...are not those of conceptual coherence but those theoretico-political dilemmas which exist at and beyond the limits of theory" (p. 133). This opposition, if there is one, of theory and politics can only be deconstructed by assuming, not by abdicating through crude self-criticism, responsibility for relations of language and power. As a consequence, *Official Discourse* speaks only with a choked protest against the possibility of the increased manipulation of administrative documents to legitimate an encroaching corporatist order.

The tide of exploratory works on the relations of language and power suspends communication theory, hermeneutics, structuralism, and deconstruction in still murky waters. Corcoran entertains readers with a clear argumentation and logical coherence, but does so by relying on a reductionistic theory of language. Burton and Carlen provide readers with a broad sampling of linguistic theories and illustrate a bold attempt to apply them to politics, but submerge both in a largely superfluous theory of the state. Corcoran's politics have a technocratic ring. Burton and Carlen's politics lead one to ask for which political party *Official Discourse* may be an official publication. The tide of critical works on language and power may be swelling, but these two works are disappointing washouts.

Dennis Crow

Kendall Bailes. *Technology and Society under Lenin and Stalin.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978.

Due to the relative "backwardness" of Russian society and the Russian economy, all the more devastated by war and revolution, one of the most important elements of the great Soviet effort at "modernization" during the 1920s was the technical intelligentsia. This group, however, was highly problematic within the context of the

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Bolshevik revolution; the technical specialist was considered necessary, yet his very necessity made him dangerous. Unlike the vanguard party intellectual, the technical specialist had not been ascribed a particular role in the communist society. Kendall Bailes' *Technology and Society under Lenin and Stalin* analyzes the ambiguous role that emerged for the Soviet technostructure during the twenties and thirties, and demonstrates the group's significance for Soviet history.

Bailes utilizes a combination of Marxism and Weberian categories on order to understand the social function of the specialist. He examines problems of class interest, on the one hand, and the legitimation of authority for an elite, on the other. Moreover, implicit in Bailes' work is an examination of the tension between the "charismatic" leadership of Lenin and Stalin (and their revolutionary claims) and the bureaucratic apparatus of the technostructure they came to rely on. These concepts, of course, may be less antithetical than either Marxian or Weberian orthodoxy would lead us to believe.

In his opening chapter, Bailes considers the varying political attitudes of the Russian technical intelligentsia during the turmoil of 1917 and works backwards from there, studying the history of the group prior to that time. It is an important discussion and requires a brief restatement here. As Bailes shows, opinions were mixed within the technostructure regarding what political factions, if any, the group should support. Sentiment ranged from outright condemnation of the Bolsheviks and official prohibitions against membership in organizations that "aided the 'ruin of industry,' " to a more pragmatic view of support for whoever held power. There was even scattered enthusiasm for the Bolshevik position. Bailes seeks to explain this ambivalence in terms of three important factors: "1) social composition and education; 2) work in production and in research and development; and 3) professional organization and political role" (25).

As in France, Russia's technical intelligentsia, originally a creation of the Tsarist state, was a largely self-perpetuating elite that drew upon government sponsored schools for its memberships. Whereas the older institutes, which trained students primarily for administrative positions, were intended for the children of the upper classes; newer schools, established during the mid-nineteenth century, recruited young urban workers for practical training in production. There thus existed a perceptible system of social stratification within the technostructure. Democratization of the technical institutes was a constant issue throughout the late Tsarist era and would remain so during the time of Stalin.

One of the primary obstacles to democratization of the institutes was the geographical distribution of the schools. They tended to be in the large cities, and students were often reluctant to leave for the provinces after graduation. This exacerbated the already acute shortage of technical skill in the regions probably most in need of it and contributed to the growth of a social group peculiar to the cities. Oppressive social controls and poverty-level existence combined to make the students politically self-conscious and generally leftist. After the 1905 revolution, and again after 1917, there were calls for student self-rule and changes in curricula.

Still, the rewards for completing a technical education were considerable, and this created some ambivalence in social attitudes. Students may have leaned to the left politically but they did not want to jeopordize the privileges of their position. Bailes explains: "This gave the experience of young technologists two sharp edges: insecurity and the ambition of upward mobility. Their insecurity often pulled them to the left politically, and some found themselves caught between the urge for political activism,

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especially in a crisis, and the drive to excell, expecially in quieter times. At all times, Russian engineering students tended, on the one hand, to fear failure or expulsion, which meant slipping into the lower orders, and, on the other hand, to resent the privileged and often technically incompetent people who held so many of the commanding positions in Russian society before 1917" (35). And, significantly, such issues were not limited to the student population. The professoriate was equally divided: "...some teachers were content to hold stoutly to their hard-won privileges and established ways, unwilling to challenge the government, and another large segment felt compelled to work for further social change. The latter group sought the often contradictory goals of greater autonomy vis-a-vis the government, at the same time trying to increase their influence within the government and to gain greater financial support from the government for technical education. The seeds of many future conflicts between students and professors in technology, and between the engineering professoriate and the Soviet government were sown in the late Imperial period in such areas as these" (35-36).

If in the first decades of this century relations between the Bolsheviks and the technical intelligentsia were, at best luke warm, by late 1918 cooperation had increased greatly. And the initiative for this new partnership came from both sides. The specialists needed the Bolsheviks as much as the Bolsheviks needed the specialists. For both, it was a matter of survival. Technical specialists sought protection from resentful workers and from government harassment (such as confiscation of personal property), while the Bolsheviks sought managers whose technical knowledge would be instrumental in constructing the communist society. The off-spring of this shotgun marriage was a mixed blessing, indeed.

No one was more active than Lenin himself in forging the uneasy alliance of the party and the technostructure. Whereas he had little patience with cultural intellectuals, whose ideas he did not consider useful, Lenin regarded technical intellectuals, and their practical knowledge, quite favorably. He thus protected them from the attacks of the far left. Bailes notes that Lenin "moved to curb workers' control and the power of the factory committees, a concern uppermost in the minds of most technical experts at this time. He also sought to change trade-union and communist attitudes toward the use of progressive rates for piecework and other facets of scientific management, the system worked out by the American engineer, F.W. Taylor, and generally opposed by radicals and trade unionists throughout the industrial world in this period" (50).[1]

From early on, then, Lenin sought to create a society that was, as Bailes puts it, "strongly imbued with technocratic values." What becomes apparent in Baile's text, though never stated explicitly, is that Lenin's "scientism" was all-encompassing; his naive belief in a "scientific socialism" carried over into an equally naive faith in the ability of science to serve as the basis for the new society. Stripped as it was of the self-consciousness of the cultural intelligentsia, Lenin's vision lapsed into a form of pragmatism — what Horkheimer labelled "instrumental reason." Lenin's goal for communism came to resemble a fundamental aim of capitalism: efficiency. While efficiency in trying to alleviate human suffering is obviously desirable, it can become dangerous when it becomes an end in itself. It is the logic that leads to show trials and executions, such as that of Tikhvinsky (60).

The technocratic mentality that Lenin encouraged became, for the Soviet ruling

1. On this point, see Rainer Traub, "Lenin and Taylor: The Fate of 'Scientific Management' in the (Early) Soviet Union" in *Telos* 37 (Fall 1978), pp. 82-92.

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elite, a double-edged sword. The cooperation between the Bolshevik leadership and the technical intelligentsia was, for both groups, more a matter of survival than of ideological harmony. Moreover, it revealed an essential contradiction in Leninist theory that, by the time of Stalin's ascendency, belied any notion of the "vanguard party" as a repository of revolutionary class-consciousness. What emerges instead is intensified class conflict, with a managerial elite substituting for the bourgeoisie. To a great extent, the show trials and the purges were an attempt to legitimize Stalin's authority by exorcising "bourgeois elements" in the name of the working-class. Thus, during the crisis period of 1928-1931, Stalin turned on the technical intelligentsia with a vengeance, accusing its membership of counterrevolutionary activities and blaming it for the failures of the Soviet regime (and particularly his leadership).

Bailes most important contribution, both to the question of Marxian theory and to the analysis of Soviet history, is his explanation of the ambivalent posture of the Politburo hierarchy toward the technical intelligentsia. As the specialists came to play a more prominent role, not only in executing policy but in formulating it as well, they began to power a threat to Marxism-Leninism potentially more dangerous than capitalist hostility. This threat was not attenuated by Stalin's attempts to create a pool of "red specialists." Indeed, Stalin merely deepened the divisions that existed within the party and within the society about the relation of the technical specialists to the working class. Bailes cites an article by Stalin's associate Markov accusing the technical intelligentsia of seeking political hegemony over the working class and its party. Bailes writes that "Markov believed that the members of the Scientific-Technical Administration had assigned the workers to some distant limbo— they would achieve an important role only in the future, when they approached the cultural and the technical competence of the engineers." The point that Markov misses, of course, is that the Leninist theory of the party invites such an elitist ideology. Bailes commentary bears repeating in full: "Besides the Marxist attitude toward specialization, perhaps an even greater source of tension arose from another ideological factor. From the Marxist point of view the engineers and scientists represented a threat more dangerous than the capitalists themselves. If control over the means of production is the key to political power, then the historical role of the capitalists would come to a predetermined end with the abolition of private property. It was much more difficult to foresee the day when the technical intelligentsia might disappear as a unique and indispensable group. Did not the engineers and scientists represent a new stratum whose place in modern society seemed guaranteed indefinitely by the imperatives of industrialization? If their knowledge gave them control over the means of production, then what was to prevent the new technological elites from seizing political power in postcapitalist society? Viewed from this vantage point, the industrial party affair and the related terror against an element of the old technostructure illuminate a real crisis in postrevolutionary Marxism. As the Soviet Union crossed the threshold of rapid industrialization, it became all the more urgent to define the relationship of the technical intelligentsia to the means of production and, by extension, to their political role in socialist society" (119). And, perhaps the most telling passage of the book: "Just as the independent peasantry were repressed in the same years in order to control the means of agricultural production, and the NEP-men, or small-scale manufacturers and tradesmen, were repressed to control another area of production and exchange, so the old technostructure in Stalin's eyes, required stricter control. One may well regard the means used as counterproductive and a form of surplus repression, but it is necessary to understand that the logic of Stalin's approach grew out of a Marxist-

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Leninist analysis of society and politics; it cannot be dismissed simply as a form of paranoia" (120).

If Bailes is correct in arguing that Stalin's tactics discouraged the technocratic mentality among Soviet engineers and encouraged instead political loyalty, one must question the meaning of such a victory. In fact, Stalin ultimately succeeded only in asserting political hegemony over the technical intelligentsia while simultaneously incorporating much of the latter's ideology into the political and economic goals of the Soviet state. As Bailes himself indicates, "the technostructure did not become passive followers of the party; it had merely changed its tactics" by exerting influence within the party itself (140). By mid-1931, the Politburo had once again reversed its policy regarding the technical intelligentsia and was well on its way to solidifying the technocratic society implicit in Lenin's thought. Writes Bailes, "After 1931, the crisis of legitimacy faced by both groups was resolved in a unique way. The Communist party and Stalin in particular used, along with other forms of legitimation, technological achievements designed and carried out under the supervision of the technical intelligentsia, to help legitimize the party's and Stalin's own claims to power. At the same time, especially after 1931, the Communist party increasingly used its power to raise the authority and status of the technical intelligentsia, legitimizing its power over the working class" (409-410).

Bailes wisely rejects a vulgar technological determinism and is careful to point out that it is not technology itself, but the way in which it is applied that affects the social and political organization of industrial societies. He thus avoids the pitfalls of either an orthodox Weberian or Marxian approach by analyzing the crucial dialectic of "techné and praxis." In this respect, Bailes work serves as a valuable "empirical" contribution to the theoretical terrain mapped out by such "revisionist" thinkers as the Frankfurt School and its various counterparts, East and West.

William Hackman

Ray Reece. *The Sun Betrayed: A Report on the Corporate Seizure of U.S. Solar Energy Development*. Boston: South End Press, 1979. 234 pages. $12.50 cloth, $5.50 paper.

No area holds more promise for the revival of grass roots politics in the 1980s than the issues related to energy and the environment. Reagan's election, his subsequent cabinet appointments, and budget proposals promise further environmental degredation. The problems that this will generate are difficult to solve since adverse economic and health effects are not viewed as legitimate consequences of capitalist enterprise.

All of this and more adds up to a credibility problem for corporate interests.[1] An

1. Even public opinion polls, not noted for probing beyond the surface, reveal a public suspicious of the energy monopolies. Thus, 70% of respondents in a September 1979 Gallup Poll believe that the last gasoline shortage was caused by the oil companies. Other environmental problems, such as water shortages, are becoming disturbing occurrences of everyday life. To make matters worse from the corporate viewpoint, the media have focused attention on toxic waste dumps that threaten a number of communities. Anti-nuclear referendums are being placed on ballots with increasing frequency, and the recent unsuccessful attempt to close an operating nuclear power plant in Maine reflects the growing strength of nuclear opponents.

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April 1979 poll reveals that Americans, by a wide margin, trust the government rather than the oil companies to develop new energy resources. Reece recognizes the depth of the impending crisis and has completed a penetrating study that shows such faith in government to be misplaced. His study of U.S. solar energy policy from its formulation in the Nixon administration in the early 1979s to the resignation of James Schlesinger as Secretary of Energy provides valuable details on the intricate links between corporations and appendages of the state in the direction of energy policy.

Although this work is in the best tradition of American muckraking journalism, Reece employs a theoretical framework that can only partially explain the evidence he gathered. He relies on Barnet and Müller's *Global Reach*, which prompted him to characterize U.S. energy policy as the product of a struggle between "two opposing and mutually exclusive perceptions of the future of western industrial society" (15). The growing centralization of economic power envisaged by corporate interests is pitted against the weakening opposition of the small entrepreneurs who represent the decentralist, individualistic alternative of American ideology. He presents a populist attack of the corporate state, and defends the interests of the vanishing petty bourgeoisie. Reece poses the problem as a battle between different world-views, and is never able to link his findings to the structural crisis of capitalism. On the whole, this work does not go beyond the discovery that American ideology is not an accurate portrayal of economic and political reality.

Nevertheless, he provides considerable information concerning the workings of capitalist society, and argues for the existence of a ruling class. Reece's conclusion emphasizes the ruling class's consensus on national energy policy rather than the conflict that would exist if any fractions of corporate capital were not in concert. The major principles of the corporate-government solar energy policy are summarized as follows: 1) control the pace of development of solar energy technologies; 2) emphasize solar applications most compatible with present capital-intensive, centralized power systems; 3) assist development of solar divisions in major corporations through government subsidies; 4) consolidate the position of large corporations in the solar market through elimination of small solar firms; 5) present high-technology alternatives (power tower, solar space satellites) as the eventual solution rather than decentralized benign applications with attendant emancipatory political implications; and 6) centralize control of energy policy in a single agency to facilitate corporate access to government largesse (26).

Reece sees the formulation of U.S. energy policy as a "story of deceit, vested interest, and collusion in the highest echelons of U.S. industry and government" (4), and then proceeds to characterize the policy as a "technocratic conspiracy" (13), which has transformed fundamental political questions into technical ones. In fact, it is difficult to discern where the corporation ends and the government begins since nearly all the men at the top of the federal bureaucracy are supporters of high-technology, capital-intensive, grandiose schemes (such as solar satellites) that appeal to corporate interests. The energy bureaucracy's predilection to fund this approach is not an accident, and Reece documents the "revolving door" through which corporate executives enter government, control energy policy, dispense funds to likeminded corporate enterprises, and pass back into private industry to use contacts made while in government to attract energy research and development funds.

Though the corporate-government link comes as no surprise, Reece's detailed examination of the careers of influential individuals, the composition of the important corporate-government "advisory" bodies and the means by which foundations, think

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tanks, utilities, energy conglomerates, the banking elite, nuclear energy contractors, defense industries, and major universities cooperate to secure their share of federal funds should effectively eliminate any lingering belief that U.S. energy policy is being conducted in the *public* interest. Reece supports the view expressed by one of his informants: U.S. energy policy and the Energy Research and Development Administration (ERDA) in particular is "the new technological porkbarrel" that has succeeded, among other things, in easing if not eliminating the financial problems faced by defense contractors since funding for the Vietnam war began to subside (99).

His careful study of the decision-making mechanisms of the corporate-government energy bureaucracy provides evidence for an alternate interpretation of U.S. energy policy. Reece is angered that public policy could be directed by narrow, self-serving, and inherently anti-democratic special interests. What Reece fails to realize is the necessity of this "solution" for the problems of late capitalism. Yet, each piece of evidence that Reece has uncovered illuminates the *structural* dimension of the crisis. The significant elements of the configuration of capitalism are all prominent in Reece's presentation but are not adequately interpreted. The depoliticization of the citizenry, the attempt to render political questions into technical ones, a new planning and coordinating role that the state must assume to lend a minimal, though distorted amount of rationality to an otherwise anarchic economy, and, most importantly, the direct intervention of the state to solve the fundamental problem of capital accumulation are all necessary components of the corporate-government strategy to maintain the viability of capitalism.

These deficiencies in no way detract from the value of the book. One of its chief strengths is that it dispells a number of prevalent myths about U.S. energy policy that the media continues to promote. Americans generally assume that the development of solar power and alternative energy sources is inevitable (around the year 2000) and that the U.S. is devoting a sufficient effort to succeed in the task. His investigation of U.S. energy policy shows it to be the creature of corporate exigency to serve corporate needs. The most interesting conclusion is that U.S. energy policy has remained *unchanged* since its formulation in 1971. Once again, this challenges the illusion that our energy policy has undergone constant reevaluation and revision to account for changing conditions such as the 1973 oil embargo, the much publicized though belatedly adopted Carter energy policy or the problems with nuclear power that have received more attention after the Three Mile Island accident. While reassuring promises of energy independence have distracted the American mind, the substance of U.S. energy policy is contrary to what it is publicized to be. Despite nuisance environmentalists the corporate-government energy strategy remains intact and relatively unthreatened, and there will be no real effort to develop alternate energy sources until the corporations are assured a place in the market.

Another significant contribution is the identification of viable alternatives to corporate solutions. Reece shows that proven technologies are currently available but have purposely been ignored. Even the well-informed advocate of decentralized energy applications will learn about inventions by small entrepreneurs that have not been developed simply because of the corporate stranglehold on government financial support. On the basis of a comparison of corporate-government projects with similar projects accomplished by small energy firms, Reece concludes that small scale efforts are much less expensive and more efficient than large corporate counterparts.

In the end, Reece does not provide much of a political strategy to deal with U.S. energy policy. He concludes rather pessimistically that "small-scale solar

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energy. . . aiming at decentralized, democratic, and maximally efficient applications has been strangled" (189). In the last chapter of the book Reece hopes that adoption of alternate technologies at the grass roots level will stimulate opposition to corporate-government energy policy. Rather than leave opposition to atomized individuals, Reece advocates more community organizing, and provides examples of successes such as that of the South Bronx's People's Development Corporation to show that energy self-sufficiency and community development contribute to political awareness and action. Without doubt, Reece is correct about the value of community organizing, especially in ghettos. But whether this really represents a threat to corporate power may depend less on the actions of community organizers than on the failure of the corporate-state to solve the problems of how to protect capital's profitability without precipitating intolerable hardships for most Americans.

Robert John

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